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ABSTRACT

This manual presents a systematic way to elicit and interpret life style. The definition of life style used is one proposed by Adler that views the life style of any individual as a singular pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting that is unique to that individual and that represents the context in which all specific manifestations have to be considered. Chapter 1 describes life style, presenting a biological overview of why life style develops; examining factors that influence life style; defining a variety of functions of the life style; and describing distorted perceptions in the life style. Chapter 2 focuses on elements of the family constellation, paying particular attention to the sibling constellation, family values and their effects on sibling traits, the family atmosphere, parental behaviors, and the family role played by each child. Chapter 3 focuses on early recollections, identifying characteristics and explaining the diagnostic significance of these recollections. Chapter 4 deals with data collection. Chapter 5 returns to the issue of the family constellation, this time examining the process and content of interpretation. Chapter 6 returns to the subject of early recollections to point out pertinent issues in interpreting early recollections. Chapter 7 provides an example of a life style assessment and chapter 8 delineates a place for life style assessment within the general area of assessment. A bibliography is included. (NB)

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Manual for Life Style Assessment

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Manual for Life Style Assessment

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To

Rudolf Dreikurs

1897-1972

PREFACE

Rudolf Dreikurs was probably the best diagnostician of human behavior that we have ever encountered. We thought his ability was uncanny. After exchanging a few words with another person, he could make surprisingly accurate guesses about that person. But before we could learn to do this, we had to follow a learning path: to learn how to ask the appropriate questions of another human being and how to begin to sort out the meanings of traits and behaviors. We had to learn to think of a family as a social organization in which children learned about life and of each human being as a unique entity. Then, we could learn to find the uniqueness of each person.

This unique "self" was what Alfred Adler called the "unique law of movement" of the individual, or the individual's "life style". Understanding life style means we understand the person as a unique entity, separate from other entities, no matter how many traits are shared between them. The life style is a "one and only", a creation of the specific individual.

In all human endeavors where understanding another person is important, knowing that person's life style is a most helpful and useful way of knowing that person. It allows us to predict many aspects of behavior. Therapists, teachers, counselors, leaders, biographers, and students of personality can find the understanding of life style useful in their endeavors.

This manual presents the most systematic way we know of to elicit and interpret life style. Our method is based upon what we learned from Rudolf Dreikurs. We offer it as a tribute to him.

We owe thanks to Dr. Joseph W. Hollis, our publisher, for spurring us onward to complete the book. We are sincerely grateful for his firm and sympathetic hand and his belief in what we were doing. We also are grateful for the numerous typists who did these chapters over and over as we wrote and rewrote. To them, and to the thousands of subjects who provided the data upon which we based our skills, we say "Thank You."

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS THE LIFE STYLE?

The origin and development of the term "life style" has been extensively reviewed by H.L. Ansbacher (1967). He has found references to the notion of personality style as early as *The Anatomy of Melancholy* by Robert Burton (1577-1640)—"...our style betrays us, " and in the French naturalist, Louis de Buffon (1707-1788)—"The style is the man himself" (*Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, 1951).

Although the notion of life style as an individual personality style seems to precede its use to denote a collective manner of living, it is the latter that became more familiar through the writings of the sociologists Max Weber (1947) and Talcott Parsons (1947). They both spoke of the life style of a collective group, such as a socioeconomic class. The term has also been used to describe those of an era such as the 60s in the United States or of a social group such as the changes in the life style of women during the sexual revolution of the same era. In psychology, the notion of collective life styles is known both through the work of Alfred Adler and of other writers such as David Shapiro (1965) who described life styles of various neurotic personalities.

While Adler often used the term in a collective sense (e.g., the life style of a pampered child), he was at pains to point out that the ***life style of any individual was a singular pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting that was unique to that individual and represented the context* (Zusammenhang) *in which all specific manifestations had to be considered.***

According to Ansbacher, Adler was probably influenced by Ludwig Klages (1906) who used the phrase "the personal guiding image." Adler used this term in 1912, as well as "guiding line" and "guiding idea" (1912/1927). Two years later, he spoke of "the line a person pursues" and "life plan" (1967). Eventually, in 1933 Adler settled upon the term "life style" (1964b) and defined it as "the unique law of movement" of an individual. The life style was seen by him as a unifying principle which organized all drives, strivings, tendencies, and aspirations into a unified pattern that could be apprehended by a trained observer.

This wide ranging concept is echoed by other modern writers who considered personality as a whole. Gordon Allport spoke of "the complex propriate organization that determines the 'total posture' of a mature life system" (1961, p. 237) and J.C. Coleman spoke of "the individual's pattern of assumptions [which] leads to consistent ways of perceiving, thinking and acting—to a characteristic ***modus operandi*** or life style" (1964, p. 63).

Why Life Style Develops—A Biological Overview

Some animals are instinctually programmed to such an extent that little decision making is left to the organism itself. The more complete the programming, the less creative action is required. Higher vertebrates are incompletely programmed animals. Instinctual patterns do not provide a complete program to humans on how to cope with the multitude of stimuli and challenges posed by a human life. The human is rather equipped with an ability to program self through learning. Such an ability, which requires extended development of cognitive functions such as decision making, value setting, comparing, and concluding is most highly developed in those animals which have the greatest cognitive abilities.

Where rules for coping behavior are not provided by instincts, they must be developed by other means. Rules are generalizations which permit the application of learned material to coping behavior. Without rules, each situation would require trial and error behavior. Even the primitive pleasure principle of Freudian psychology is a rule for determining behavior. The life style is the "rule of rules" for the individual. It is the cognitive blueprint for behavior which is required when no instinctual blueprint exists. But the life style is not merely a collection of rules, it is the organization of all rules into a ***pattern*** which dominates not only the rules but all coping activity.

How It Develops

Equipped with inherited receptors, processors, organizers, and effectors; born into the human Umwelt with its particular perceptual world and its numerous possibilities for extension; even before its nervous system is mature enough to permit full locomotion, the infant's learning begins. The learning starts out by trial and error of the simplest variety as the infant tries to organize its world in order to cope with it. The small child locates, reorganizes, compares, contrasts, times, sizes, tests, retests, and otherwise applies methods of learning until it develops rules which permit it to relate to the world in a less chaotic way. It studies cause and effect, good and bad, pleasant and unpleasant, desirable and undesirable, until it is able to make primitive abstractions. These early rules continue to be developed and organized into an increasingly elaborate ***pattern*** which acts as an integrator for the rules.

> An example of such empirical growth of a pattern is found in the puzzle of Rubik's cube. As continued efforts are made to solve the puzzle, the moves that seem to promise success are learned more and more smoothly and the "whole" of the problem becomes more and more clear.

The early pattern is a rule of thumb. It is constantly reinforced as the child grows until the rule of thumb is elevated to the status of a law, the "unique law of movement." This law cannot help but be reinforced by experience because it influences the pattern of perception itself, as will be described later.

Because it is a unique personal law, it receives all of the person's loyalties, as do the other familiar objects of early childhood. Because it seems to permit better coping, it becomes as a private religion or personal myth. Because it is based upon a private logic (Dreikurs, 1973), it is not influenced by common sense when that sense conflicts with the private logic. Furthermore, it is the ***only*** set of rules for coping the person has.

Eventually the ***pattern*** becomes a dominant directive in the life of the individual, a cherished Holy Writ which propounds what is required by life and how it is best achieved.

Life Style as a "Cause" of Behavior

In most scientific discussion, the word cause is used in the sense of Aristotle's ***causa efficiens;*** namely, cause as the "source of change or rest." Adlerians have also used Aristotle's concept of ***causa finalis*** when they discuss the "goal directedness of behavior" and the "purpose of symptoms." This approach is frankly teleological and Dreikurs and Sonstegard even called Adlerians "teleoanalysts" (1968). The general concept of ***cause*** is a larger one, however, and the concept of causality itself leads us to speak of cause from more than one point of view (Allport, 1955).

One type of cause discussed by Aristotle is the ***causa formalis;*** namely, the ordering or patterning of relationships that leads to specific results. In this sense the life style is a "cause" of behavior. In what ways does it act as a determiner? It (1) is a limiter in the sense that any law limits, (2) gives direction to the line of movement, but (3) also provides a feedback which reinforces or inhibits the movement. Life style is not a determiner at only one point in time or at one point in a program. It is a continuing determiner at each point in time and with each step in the progression of an event. Its causal action is continuous. It constantly defines situations and gives instructions for responding to them.

Adlerian theory holds that one always has the ability to change the life style and thus transcend the limits. In this sense the life style as ***cause*** is a "soft determiner" rather than a rigid one and behavior is not inevitable but based upon a series of choices which delimits direction of movement. The life style is transcended through the educative experience of psychotherapy or sometimes through life experiences which lead to self-awareness and recognition of subjective truths, which we may call "conversion" experiences. (See for example the story of Jean Valjean and the candlesticks in Victor Hugo's novel, *Les Miserables.*)

Components of the Life Style

If we consider the life style a pattern, then perhaps we can recognize the recurrent themes in the life of each individual that can convey to us the essence of the individual pattern. Where, however, we examine a great many individual themes, we find that they cluster around a few main elements. This is not surprising. If the life style is intended as a basic adaptive pattern, then the main elements will deal with some of the basic issues in every human life. Because these basic issues are viewed through the subjective eye of the self, one can expect to find that the life style speaks about these issues in expressed or implied ***convictions*** about them. Indeed, one way of recognizing the components of the life style is to identify the convictions according to the kinds of issues with which they are concerned. These issues seem quite basic; the meaning of life, sentiments about human relationships, an evaluation of the self, and what life requires. The expressed convictions are reducible to platitudes. This is partly because a platitude is an effective if unsophisticated way of expressing a subjectively perceived truth and partly because these convictions are formed at a time of life when simple generalization is one of the few intellectual devices available to the person. In addition, the purpose of the life style is to simplify—that is, to provide easily apprehended rules for behavior and naturally, oversimplication is a common result. Indeed oversimplification, exaggeration of one aspect of life at the expense of others and mistaking a part for the whole are three main mistakes in logic that can be found in a study of life styles.

Those convictions which we identify as component parts of the life style can be divided into two groups: those about "what is"—that is, about nature of our individual selves and the "reality" we face; and those about the values and behaviors we will pursue in our efforts to master "what is."

Convictions About "What Is": Self and the World

Carl Rogers (1961) used the term ***phenomenal field*** to mean the person's total world of experience. Parts of the phenomenal field may be conscious or unconscious. The self-concept is a differentiated part of the field. Thus, ***self*** is experienced as located in the world and interacting with it. But ***self*** is a most complex concept and the personal experience of self ranges from acute awareness of certain aspects to barely perceived consciousness of other aspects and, sometimes, even to outright surprise at what we discover in ourselves.

After Allport (1955) and Shulman (1965), the self concept can be thought of as including a number of subsets: a bodily sense (what is me), an identity (***who*** am I), a self-image (what am I), a self-regard or self-esteem (what good am I), and a self-as-object notion (what effects me). Each of these subsets is represented in the life style and can therein be identified. The statement "I am a short, fat, balding male who is good to his mother and feels guilty if he neglects her" contains all these subsets.

The continuous interaction with the world leads to continuous self-evaluation. The experience of the world includes a comparable experience of the self as interacting. Of all the subsets, the self-esteem seems to be the most vulnerable to fluctuation in the continuing interaction and attempts to preserve self-esteem are easily observed in social interactions. Congruence between self-esteem and the other subsets (self-acceptance and self-respect) has been described as an important task of life (Dreikurs & Mosak, 1967).

The bodily sense (what is me) was described by Allport (1955) as an anchor for self-awareness. It includes beliefs about the integrity of the physical body and its basic adequacy. The self-identity (who am I) is the social and cosmic ***location*** each one preempts. "I am male (not female)"; "I am black (not white)"; "I am a vegetarian (not a meat eater)"; "I am a Democrat (not Republican)" are all ways of locating the self through reference points.

Self-image (what am I) is also concerned with identity but it is more of an evaluation than a location and has implications for self-esteem (what good am I). Thus, "I am not smart enough" is a self-image statement; "Therefore, my worth is diminished" is the self-esteem conclusion. Self-image refers to abilities and status, self-esteem is the evaluation of worth. Self-image also can include convictions about one's potential—such as, "If only I had been properly loved as a child I would have been able to accomplish something in life."

Self-as-object (what effects me) refers to the perceived consequences to the self of its various interactions with the world. One cannot judge effects on the self without taking the world into account. One may believe "If I eat too much, I will get fat," and this statement is about "what is me" and "what I can do to me." It recognizes that we are subject to influence by the actions of both ourselves and others.

Adler's theory is a field theory. The individual has subjective convictions not only about oneself but also about the world around one and about the relation between self and world. We have chosen to call this subjective picture of the world the ***world image*** or ***Weltbild.*** The world image is a set of convictions about all items (objects, processes and locations) outside of the subjective self, and to the whole concept of "outside" in general. With the "outside" is what we are generally coping. (Sometimes we have to cope with the self). Not all aspects of the "outside" are of equal importance; some can be safely ignored, others are seen as crucial to the self. Thus, for some people a flight of birds across the sky has no personal significance. For others, it is an omen.

The concept of ***Dasein*** (Being-in-the-world) has become familiar to us through the writings of the Existentialists, notably, Ludwig Binswanger (1963). ***Dasein*** is the important subject of study for Binswanger—the way in which the person experiences self in interaction with the world, but the world is a ***unique*** world for each individual, a construct designed by the individual's own unique apprehension of his/her existence. For heuristic purposes we have discussed the self as a separate entity and examined it from several aspects. The self-as-object clearly implies that an ambient world is the surround in which the self functions. This surrounding world, as it is experienced is itself a creative product of the perceptual program of the perceiver. The "design" or image of the world is to what the person responds.

This ***Weltbild,*** again for heuristic purposes, can be divided into a picture of ***life in general*** (the basic terms of existence) and a ***social world***—the world of living among people. This division grows out of our repeated finding, when we look at the material we use to formulate a life style, that our subjects form pictures of themselves as existing under a set of conditions (a mortal human being with limited capacities subject to the laws of nature);and also as one of a class of entities (human beings) in relationship with each other. Thus, when we formulate a life style, we will find ideas about life in general—such as, "Life is unpredictable" or surprising, predestined, chaotic, malevolent, or any one of many other adjectives.

Julian Rotter's concept of ***locus of control*** is an example of such an image of life in general and its effect on oneself. Locus of control is a cognitive style. People who experience themselves as having a great deal of control over what happens in the world around them have a different world image than those who believe they have little or no control (Rotter, 1966). The first group look to themselves to cope with the world. The second group look to others, to luck, to divinity, or to other outside forces to determine the order of events.

Image of the Social World—Human Interrelationships. Subjective beliefs about the nature of society and human interaction vary widely. To a certain extent these beliefs are influenced by the context of the culture (see for example the difference between the social outlook of Western capitalist democracies and Soviet communist societies). But the most important beliefs about human relationships are individual, idiosyncratic, and grow out of personal life experiences. Many of them exist outside conscious awareness. One may believe that other humans are friends or enemies, more or less powerful, approachable or not, hostile, rejecting, uncaring, confusing, unpredictable, and so forth. Their approval and/or love and/or attention may be seen as necessities. Sometimes all human relations are seen as untrustworthy; often the different sexes are assigned different qualities. One person may feel unable to influence others in any way or may see others as operating according to arbitrary whims. Another may believe that people can be successfully appeased if one is pleasing and avoids offending at all times.

Many of these convictions define values. Thus, to please others is a positive value to some. Conversely, to overpower others is a positive value to others.

Conclusions About Behavior

Our purpose is to explain the life style and we have tried to do so by logic and analogy, by example and metaphor. We have given it one definition as a patterned set of rules or laws. It is in the conclusions about behavior, as expressed in the life style, that one can perhaps see most clearly how it is a set of rules. We have called this aspect of the life style "conclusions" but they are, like the other aspects, apparent to us as "convictions." We call this one "conclusions" for another reason. It is because one way we have of describing the life style is to say that it seems to fit into a rubric: "I am . . ., Life is . . ., therefore . . ." The ***conclusions*** about behavior are the "therefores."

Proponents of "natural law" have been wont to say that animals follow two primary urges; the urge to self-preservation and the urge to preservation of the species. Adlerians would certainly agree that such urges exist but the life style is the final arbiter of what is important and these two supposedly immutable and primal urges often operate in distorted ways, or according to personal priorities, or varying from situation to situation.

Self-preservation often comes to mean preservation of one's "face" rather than preservation of life (Cf. ***hara-kari***—a form of self-immolation to preserve honor). Preservation of the species has usually been an ideal rather than a goal. The goal has more often been preservation of the group with which one most closely identifies (perhaps the family).

What each person considers significant in life is, like the world image, influenced by the cultural context; but it is also idiosyncratic. The life style contains a prototypic statement that fits the rubric we have described: "given what I am and what life is, this is important (necessary, desirable) in order for me to have a place in the world."

The Guiding Self-ideal. Adler first used the term ***guiding self-ideal*** in 1927/1912. His theory posits such a self-created ideal as the final goal of the behavioral program of the life style. It functions as a "point of orientation" for directing the "line of movement" of the individual person. The striving in this direction is ceaseless. This final goal is the self-chosen way of fulfilling the basic psychological motivations. However, sets of ideas almost always offer a ***moral judgment*** about life and for the self, namely, how life and the self "should" be. (This aspect of the life style can be compared to the ego-ideal and super-ego of psycho-analytic theory.) Thus, "I should never sin," "I should never act cowardly," "I should always be right" are idealized demands upon the self, while "People should always play fair," "God shouldn't have let it happen" and "They should stop persecuting me" are all idealized demands upon the environment.

Like other aspects of the life style, ideals are fictions created out of the subjective frame of reference. They are private and not necessarily conscious and often not subject to consensual validation. As we said earlier, they are guides to movement and causative in a teleological sense. In Adler's words:

> The goal of the mental life becomes its governing principle, its ***causa finalis.*** Here we have the root of the unity of the personality, of the individuality. It does not matter what the source of its energies may have been. Not their origin, but their ***end,*** their ultimate goal, constitutes their individual character. (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956, p. 94)

Of course, the goal is adaptive and expansive. Furthermore, the goal can always be seen as a social goal; that is, it never is able to ignore the social field in which man lives.

Typical examples of dominant goals are, "I want to be first, to be on top." "I want others to protect me and run interference for me." "I want to never lose control." "I want to be the center." Being a point of orientation it is constantly operative. It acts as the nexus of the personality structure, leads to the "unity of personality" concept of Adlerian theory.

The influence of the final or dominant goal can be seen upon examining certain central themes in psychoneurotic patients in treatment (Mosak, 1968). Although neurotic symptoms often shift during the course of treatment (obsessive-compulsives may become openly aggressive) the final goal of the patient remains the same—to keep life under control in one case, to defeat others in the second case).

In almost every description of a life style one can find the selected ideals that the particular person will value above others in achieving a place for oneself. One person will value prestige above all else, a second will value money, a third will make "love" the first choice, a fourth will value safety above all.

Moral Judgments. One corollary of this point of view is that it considers basic ethical attitudes to be much more an individual psychological matter rather than a result of mass propaganda or social systems. Ideals judge what is or is not important, good and desirable.

A typical example of a life style can then be written in shorthand fashion according to the aforementioned rubric:

> I am small and weak.
> Life is dangerous.
> Therefore others must protect me.

Adlerians have a penchant for describing life styles in a word or phrase and would say that this is the life style of a "weak baby." A different example is

> I am the rightful heir to my father's power.
> Life is here to appreciate me and serve me.
> Therefore, I have to be the center of attention.

We might call this the life style of a "crown prince."

Methods (How To Do It). The rubric we have devised does not specifically include all aspects of the life style and is only a shorthand expression. One could easily add a statement about methods. Many techniques of behavior change during a person's life. One learns new techniques and discards old ones as one's understanding and experience grows. These methods are not what we mean here, but only those that consistently throughout the life history of the person are used as behavioral techniques for striving toward the dominant goal, analogous to what Allport (1961) called cardinal traits. Common methods can be clearly seen in those clinical syndromes we call the personality disorders. Thus, the schizoid personality uses a method we call "distance-keeping" (Adler, 1968/1920; Credner, 1935), the dependent personality uses being needy to get service from others and so forth. Each dominant goal may have one or more methods commonly found in association with it and similar methods may be found associated with dispare goals. Thus:

> "I want to be first, to be on top."
>
> Possible methods:
> "I will impress every one with my power."
> "I will be the best in everything."
> "If I can't be the best, I'll be the worst."
>
> Or: "I want others to protect me."
>
> Possible methods:
> "I will charm them into loving me."
> "I will only associate with those who protect me."

Long-continued patterns of behavior are often "methods" in our sense. The short phrase names the Adlerians use for life styles often describe the method as much as the goal; e.g., "weak baby" and "crown prince" are ways of describing a set of attitudinal and behavioral responses to life. If we say one has the life style of a "victim," we are saying something about the method the individual uses to achieve the desired goals as well as trying to tell the "gist" of the individual's whole pattern in one analogical phrase.

TABLE 1.1
Elements of the Life Style

Convictions about "What is"	
Self-image	(What am I?)
World image	Life in general (How does it work?)
(Weltbild)	The social world (What is the relationship between myself and others?)
Convictions about "What should be"	
(Ethical values)	
The Ideal World	(How should life be?)
Moral Judgements	(What is good and proper behavior?)
Instructions for behavior	
Dominant goal/self ideal	(What shall I pursue?) (What must I become?)
Methods	(How shall I do it?)

INFLUENCES ON THE LIFE STYLE

A developing set of concepts can be subject to many influences, more during its early plastic stages than its later rigid ones. If one could map the whole developmental history of a life style one would see at work the effects of body constitution, culture, and perhaps pure chance as well. Several of these influences deserve more extensive mention.

Ecological Factors

One may think that the very act of being human would limit the variety of life styles one would find among humans. A natural assumption is that humans would not have life styles suitable for dogs or horses. On further thought maybe biological explanations exist for the wide variety among life styles. Just as "nature" devises animals and plants to fit all but the most extreme situations, so a tendency exists for the range of life styles to expand to fit all of the available social living spaces (or social roles). The effect of the available social roles upon the developing life style will be seen more clearly in the discussion of the family constellation.

Constitutional Factors

Genetic Factors. Whether or not direct genetic influences have an effect upon the life style has not yet been conclusively answered, but no certain genetic effects appear in the life styles we have found. For the present, our answer must be that the life stlye is behavior of an order that cannot yet be measured directly for genetic factor influence.

Constitution. By the same token, the effects on life style of endocrine glands, the central nervous system, and the pituitary-hypothalamic axis cannot be directly measured except in the case of obvious physical or mental defect. Unless a child is severely feeble-minded, he/she will develop a life-style if only life is long enough. Otherwise, intelligence, whether one views it as inherited or acquired, seems to be a factor in influencing the life style since intelligence is a tool for coping behavior and the ability to cope is influenced by the tools one uses.

Constitution also influences in the following way: A very pretty girl will receive different reactions from her environment than a plain one. A muscular, athletic child will find certain opportunities that are closed to less adept counterparts. Also, the quick-witted child will see alternatives the duller child misses and is likely to win more approval from adults. But in all these factors, the response of the social situation to the constitutional "given" determines how much the constitutional trait will influence the life style; that is, how it is used in the interaction with life.

Physical defects can influence the development of the life style, depending upon the child's subjective response. That which is perceived as an inferiority functions as if it was a defect. If the child is born with a defect, acquires one during development, or imagines that he/she has one, this becomes a "given" in one's life to which the person must make some answer. Thus, Shakespeare has the hunchbacked Richard III say, "Since I cannot be a lover, I'll prove a villain." As always, the answer the person makes is his/her own creation (C.A. Adler, 1936).

Developmental Sequences

Adlerian psychology recognizes that critical periods occur in development. Certain human skills require practice from an early age or they cannot be learned well. Early experiences thus influence the life style. Adlerian theory holds that these early experiences are integrated by different individuals in different ways; two children can respond in different ways to the same experience. As with cultural and familial influences, the meaning one gives to a life experience can be idiosyncratic.

For purposes of understanding the adult life style, the point in development at which an experience occurred is considered less important than the late effects of the experience; namely, the way the experience was perceived and processed to fit with the growing development of the life style program. For all practical purposes, the life style prototype seems reasonably well formed by age five. Thus, experiences from before that age are in general probably more important than later ones in influencing the final life style.

Cultural Factors

Culture is seen by Adlerians as both a limiter and expander of the psychic life. Culture provides certain basic ways of looking at the world and therefore encourages certain tendencies in the development of life style. A culture which stresses individual enterprise and accomplishment will encourage different behavior from one which stresses conformity to tradition. Moreover, the values assigned to sex, age, socioeconomic status, skin color, place of birth, and so forth will all be influenced by the culture and will influence the growing child's picture of the world around self and his/her role in it. Culture therefore provides values for the growing child to use in evaluating the world and a frame of reference for ideals and goals.

Family Influences—The Family Constellation

Each child is born into a certain family situation—an ordinal position in the family, who and what are the other family members, and what the values and atmosphere of the family are. During the course of life this specific condition may change; other siblings may be born, parents may die, crippling illness may come, and family fortunes may change. The parents may be permissive, strict, overprotective, rejecting, demanding, pampering, or inconsistent. They are, nevertheless, models who present guiding lines for the child. The family atmosphere may be oppressive or free, harmonious or full of conflict, warm and close or cold and distant, clear and simple or confusing and contradictory. Family standards may demand high performance and family myths may promise severe punishment for the child who fails to live up to expectations.

Each child responds to the situation according to subjective perceptions of it. The environment in turn responds to the activity of the child, feeding back data that the person uses to further refine his/her rules of operation. The pattern of interaction is what the Adlerian calls a "family constellation": a grouping of members playing various social roles in relation to each other. Family constellation is considered an important influence on the developing life style, but at the same time, the investigation of the family constellation is an important technique the Adlerian uses to diagnose the life style.

The main elements of the family constellation for Adlerians include sibling constellation, parent models, family values, and family atmosphere. They will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

FUNCTIONS OF THE LIFE STYLE

We have already described the life style as the cognitive blueprint, the "rule of rules" and the "unique law of movement" for each individual. We have discussed the life style as the "formal cause" of behavior, as a governor and feedback. However, we can define with more precision the functions of the life style as we see them in operation in each person.

Organizing and Simplifying Function

As previously stated, the life style provides a set of rules by which values can be assigned, a hierarchy can be established, priorities determined. Thus, it lends an overall organization to psychic activity.

Selecting Function

Actually, selecting occurs in a seven-fold function.

1. **Direction-setting.** The life style is the line of movement as the person goes through life. This line of movement can be deduced from a historical inquiry into the person's life or other observations, but the best description of the movement can be found in the life style formulation that we present in this book. Thus, the person who must avoid failure may avoid all those situations in which he/she has no guarantee of success. The ideals of the life style become beacons for the line of movement.

2. **Selective Perceiving.** Events are perceived according to the life style, and the person behaves according to these perceptions. If the life style states that others are hostile

to the person, then the individual will perceive hostility in situations where others will not.

3. **Guiding Action.** If I see myself as weak and impotent, I may most likely find myself unable to act effectively in many situations. Instead, I may be passive and/or turn to others for help. Even if I see opportunities for aggressive action, I may not take such action because I will not expect to succeed.

4. **Predicting and Anticipating.** Expectancy is in line with the life style, to the extent that it is a personality rather than a situational variable. This aspect of selection leads to the creation of self-fulfilling prophecies.

5. **Radar Function.** The life style not only permits predicting and anticipating events, it also keeps a watchful eye out for special situations. If the life style says that one will be humiliated because of one's impotence, then signals of humiliation and impotence can be watched for on a constant alert—an early warning radar system which gives ample notice. Conversely, in human relations if we meet another person who will fit into our desired ***schema*** and permit us to play the role we wish, our ability to recognize such a person is part of the radar function. When the right person comes into our sight, the alert sounds and we can begin carrying out the wished for role.

6. **Decision-making Function.** Many daily decisions are made on the basis of common sense. Where, however, common sense runs counter to the private logic of the life style, the latter prevails. Furthermore, some decisions are often not made according to common sense because sufficient data is lacking. Common examples are decisions which will have unknown consequences in an uncertain future; namely, decisions which are a gamble. Deciding to take a risk in an uncertain situation depends partly on expectancy, a cognitive variable which is influenced by the life style.

7. **Archeological Function.** This function permits us to use the earliest childhood recollections as a diagnostic device to determine the life style. Memory is selective in line with the life style and thus memories from early life are retrospectively reconstructed. The individual finds in memory historical explanations for one's own outlook.

Problem-solving Function

In a broad sense, the life style is a set of directions for the general problem of coping, of adaptation. Life can be viewed as a succession of problems to be solved. For each person, the life style sets the guidelines for problem solving.

Control of Experience

The selective perception of the life style permits an additional special kind of problem solving; namely, coping with the problem of evaluating and classifying experience. An event can become traumatic because it is so designated by the life style, since, current and past experience are perceived according to it. Moreover if the line of movement requires one to have a certain type of experience, one will arrange it. Thus, the distrustful person arranges to be betrayed and the pessimist arranges to fail in his/her endeavors.

Myth-making Function

The life style is a myth and makes myths. The self-image and world image are fictions through which the person tries to organize an understanding of the "truths" of the world. The use of such fictions to organize and apprehend experience and select responses has been discussed at length (Kelly, 1955; Vaihinger, 1965).

Reinforcing Function

The life style guides the person toward having those experiences which tend to reinforce the style itself. If the life style says "Life is dangerous," the selectivity of the life style will lead the person to experiences that reinforce this view. Thus, the life style tends to become more fixed with advancing age as it is constantly reinforced by usage.

Self-protecting Function

When events occur that would seem, objectively, to call into question the life style itself, selective perception again intervenes to filter out, reconstruct, or reinterpret the events so that they do not threaten the cherished set of rules. One cannot give up the set of rules one has until one has an alternative that is equally trustworthy. The process of reorientation in psychotherapy is largely a matter of replacing old convictions with better ones.

This self-protecting function also has been described by Sullivan (1956) who postulates the existence of a ***self system*** which functions through selective inattention to experience to filter out unwelcome information. For Sullivan, the self system is a dynamism which manages anxiety and preserves personal security by focusing awareness on what seems relevant and filtering out the irrelevant. A similar point of view has been presented by Festinger (1957) and Aronson (1972) in their discussions of ***cognitive dissonance*** as a discrepant state which motivates behavior to restore cognitive balance. In effect, when an event occurs which does not meet one's expectations, cognitive dissonance results. Aronson pointed out that all other things being equal, the balance is restored in some direction which preserves self-esteem.

Self-related Functions

Some life style functions are related to the self-concept and ideals which we have described as component part of the life style.

1. **Self-defining Function.** The life style serves to identify and define the self, its characteristics and its boundaries.

2. **Self-viewing and Judging Function.** One perceives and evaluates oneself according to one's life style. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the self is an evaluation dependent upon the values in the life style.

DISTORTED PERCEPTIONS IN THE LIFE STYLE (BASIC MISTAKES)

We have already said that oversimplification, exaggeration and mistaking the part for the whole are common mistakes in logic found in life styles. These distortions have been called ***basic mistakes*** by Dreikurs (1953). Mosak (1984) classified basic mistakes as follows:

Overgeneralizations.
  "People are hostile."
  "Life is dangerous."

False or impossible goals of "security."
  "One false step and you're dead."
  "I have to please everybody."

Misperceptions of life and of life's demands.
  "Life never gives me any breaks."
  "Life is so hard."

Minimization or denial of one's worth.
  "I'm stupid."
  "I'm undeserving."
  "I'm just a housewife."

Faulty values.
  "Be first even if you have to climb over others."

By what right do we presume to judge that a person has a mistaken style of life? Are we expressing our own biases when we make such judgments? Can we define a set of standards which are reasonably and commonly accepted by which we can judge a life style to be mistaken? It seems to us that these standards have already been suggested by Karen Horney (1966) in her formulation of ***overdriven attitudes.*** She has described these attitudes as the identifying characteristics of "neurotic claims." An overdriven attitude can be recognized because it is:

irrational
insatiable
impossible
inappropriate
intolerant
wanted without effort
egocentric
vindictive
compulsive

These are typical characteristics of what we have called basic mistakes. They are all misperceptions, inappropriate expectations, wrong meanings assigned to life situations, misplaced priorities and in addition lead to difficulties in living or defensively distorted approaches to life. In addition they are fueled by affective components which intensify them in the face of common sense.

Dreikurs (1957b) described basic mistakes as faulty social values related to contemporary standards, norms, and social prescriptions for behavior. Among them he included a desire for self elevation, perfectionism, a fear of making mistakes, concern with personal success, and overvaluation of reason with simultaneous devaluation of inner feelings. Thus, for Dreikurs, basic mistakes also grew out of contemporary social values which were inimical to healthy development.

The basic mistakes are usually outside of awareness. They often were more appropriate to the childhood situation than the current one. But the most obvious indicator of the basic mistake is probably the assessor's evaluation, "If one did not misinterpret life at such and such a point, one would not have this neurotic problem." Consequently, the defining of a basic mistake remains largely a matter of selection by the assessor. To overcome this difficulty, we are in the habit of using two diagnosticians rather than one to determine both life style and basic mistakes. (Two heads are more consensual than one.)

Basic mistakes can also be compared to Albert Ellis's (1962) ***irrational ideas.*** These are unconscious value assumptions about what is right, proper, and necessary in our lives. They stem from our cultural milieu, are learned early in life, and influence our expectations and goal behavior. They become subject to question only in psychotherapy or in moments of marked cognitive dissonance. Similar hypotheses also have been proposed by A.T. Beck (1976) who found faulty thinking exerting a causative influence in emotional disorders.

The mistakes themselves can be categorized further. Under each heading, we have listed some common examples:

1. **Distorted attitudes about the self** (inappropriate self-evaluations).

I am less capable than others.
An evil spirit resides in me.
I cannot face any unpleasantness.
I am someone special and unique.
I am entitled to my own way.
I am unlovable, undesirable, and unworthy.
I am an innocent victim.

2. **Distorted attitudes about the world and people.**

Life is completely unpredictable.
Life is a jungle (dog eat dog).
People are no damn good. (Men are only out for one thing. Women are too hard to please.)
Life penalizes any mistake.
Life is too confusing.
Life offers me no opportunity (doesn't give me a chance).
Life makes too many demands.
Life is unfair.

3. **Distorted goals.**

I must be without flaw (perfect).
Everyone must love me.
I must be a "good guy."
I must find perfect security.
I must never submit.
I will have my revenge on life.
I must always be in control.

4. **Distorted methods of operation.**

Finding fault in order to elevate oneself and/or keep distance.
Excessive dependency. ("Others must take care of me.")
Excessive competitiveness. ("Winning is the only thing that counts.")
Relating to others in exploiting and manipulating ways.
Distance keeping from others and life's requirements.
Antinomianism (self-deification).
Rebelling against all authority.
Making mountains out of molehills.

Putting all one's eggs in one basket.
Excessive self-indulgence.
Excessive self-control and caution. ("Nothing ventured, nothing lost.")
Distorting logic to make it compatible with one's own wishes.
Ignoring what one does not wish to confront.
Provoking life and others in order to feel justified.
Focusing only on what is wrong.

5. **Distorted ideals.**

"A 'real' man is aggressive, fearless, heroic and never defeated."
"A 'real' woman commands an entourage of men and receives gifts daily."
"The world will only be right when everyone's wishes are completely satisfied."
"I want a love deeper than the world has known before."
"Any transgression should be severely punished."
"The only thing worth being is a 'star' (or genius)."

Clinical Uses of the Life Style

We make a large claim when we say that when we understand the life style, we understand the person. Our formulation, after all, is a description of a ***leitmotif***, a theme which runs through the person's life and lends unity to the personality by giving it a style. Any life style works itself out in various ways in different life situations and the longer we know a person, the more subsets of the guiding line of movement become apparent to us. Knowing the life style, then, is not only useful in an original assessment of the person, but it allows a continuing reference point for those who work with people over a period of time—psychotherapists, counselors, teachers, and others.

Life Style in Diagnosis

The life style provides an overview of personality in several dimensions: The concept of the self, the view of the world, the basic motivations, and the usual methods of operation.

Past events and current problems can be understood in terms of the life style. Even symptom behavior can be understood in terms of the private logic of a person who is acting according to his/her own beliefs and anticipations.

The life style can be used to predict future behaviors. It is not able to predict specific events but permits us to extrapolate future probabilities along those parameters that are issues in terms of the life style. A person with the life style of a "weak baby" will behave accordingly, even in the relationship to a therapist.

Life Style in Treatment

Part of treatment consists of revealing the life style to the patient. One discusses it with the individual, explains factors that led to it, describes the effect it would have on behavior, shows how it leads to difficulties, and exposes its internal logical and consistency.

The life style becomes a reference point for therapy. It presumes to show what is mistaken and what needs change. Interpretations of current and past behavior are made in terms of the life style and the memory of the past as well as future expectations are shown to be affected by the selective bias of the life style.

Mosak (1965) has pointed out that knowing the life style gives certain specific advantages to the therapist. It allows the latter to predict how the patient will behave in the therapeutic situation, to plan appropriate strategy, to predict the material the patient will bring to therapy, and to keep the pertinent issues in mind.

We consider change in personality structure to be a change in the life style. Thus, life style become not only a reference point, but also a focal point for any psychotherapy in which personality restructure is a goal.

The life style can be used as a tool to assess the amount of personality change from therapy. This can be determined by examining changes in the early recollections. It is a characteristic and repeated finding that the earliest childhood recollections change during successful psychotherapy, just as other perceptions of the past change.

Thus, the life style determination is a valuable aid to research about change in psychotherapy, as well as a tool which can be used to routinely check the progress of change in psychotherapy (Baruth & Eckstein, 1981; Eckstein, 1976; Mosak, 1979).

SUMMARY

The life style is a superordinate organizational pattern which directs behavior. It operates by means of selective perception, cognition, memory, and so on. It codifies rules for characteristic attitudinal positions. It becomes the intervening variable between efficient cause and effect, between the stimulation of the outside world and the responsive behavior of the person. It is formed in early childhood and is self-reinforcing through selectivity. It is self-consistent, coherent, and unified. It is constant; it does not change from time to time or situation to situation, though it is not necessarily rigid. It can be recognized by its repeated appearance as a theme in the life history or even everyday behavior of an individual. It develops through trial and error and is influenced by physical, developmental, cultural, and familial factors. It is a necessary rule for coping behavior, to bring order into one's relationship with the challenging and confronting world. It is therefore of critical significance to the clinician who wishes to understand the "whys?" of human behavior.

CHAPTER 2

ELEMENTS OF THE FAMILY CONSTELLATION (FC)

According to Bottome (1939) and Gardner Murphy (1947), family constellation theory is one of Adler's main contributions to psychology. Adler first used the term in a 1937 paper in which he discussed the influence of family constellation on life style (Adler, 1937). In this paper, Adler discussed mainly the vicissitudes of birth order. In other writings Adler also discussed the importance of the relationship between the parents and children, how parents model behavior and the effect of certain parental behaviors such as pampering and rejection (Adler, 1958). Adler's pupils elaborated the concept. Reiss (1949) discussed the importance of family atmosphere and the mutual relationships between the parents. Friedmann (1930) described family systems which have their own dynamics and values. Finally, Dreikurs (1957a) described parental "guiding lines" and stated,

> The relationship between father and mother establishes the pattern for all interpersonal relationships in the family. If they are competitive with each other, the spirit of competition will characterize all the family relationships .... Whether parents are orderly or disorganized, cooperative or antagonistic, the family atmosphere will present its characterisitic pattern to the children as a standard of life. (1957a, p. 9)

Our own view of family constellation (FC) descends from that of Dreikurs, from what we saw him do as well as what he wrote. Among his writings he discussed the situation and tasks of each parent and grandparent, their own anxieties, expectancies, and demands they made on each other and on their children. He further described how parents model for children their own maladjustments and their cultural and psychological backgrounds which influence their child rearing methods. He also discussed the effect of rapid social change upon traditional family processes (Dreikurs, 1948).

Dreikurs' approach was to "normal" families. The misbehavior of children in such a family was a response to the behavior of the people around them. The behavior of both child and parents constituted a dyadic or triadic interpersonal event which occurred in the context of the family. Examination of the family constellation allowed Dreikurs to understand the parent child interaction and often to predict what interrelationship problems would exist in the family (Dreikurs, 1949, 1959). He also devised the first extensive questionnaire for the family constellation to be used with adults (Dreikurs, 1954) and the inventory we use (Mosak & Shulman, 1971) grows directly out of his work.

Descriptions of family constellation inventories can also be found in Eckstein, Baruth, and Mahrer (1978); Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979); Allen (1971); Shulman (1962); and Shulman and Nikelly (1971).

No discussion of family constellation is complete without the inclusion of the work of Toman (1969). Toman studied over 3,000 families with data collected by coworkers and assistants. He focused on birth order of parents and siblings alike and thus developed a two generation constellation. In addition, he examined the interaction of gender and birth order. Toman's findings will be examined in more detail later. First we will look at the actual elements we use to build the family constellation.

Dreikurs described the family constellation as a sociogram of the group at home during the formative years which

> reveals the field of early experiences, the circumstances under which there developed personal perspectives and biases, concepts and convictions . . . fundamental attitudes and approaches to life which are the basis for...personality. (Dreikurs, 1967, p. 137).

While the life style may be determined from any consistent pattern of behavior or may be deduced even from brief descriptions or briefly observed behavior, the most reliable method of determining the life style is from an analysis of the family constellation and the earliest childhood recollections. Family constellation is an inclusive term which contains several important elements, all a part of the child's early experiences. A complete description of the family constellation will include most of the important features found in a complete childhood history with two added features: (1) the FC includes considerable information about parents and siblings and (2) the FC investigation stresses those aspects of the childhood history which disclose the family dynamics faced by the child and its characteristic direction of movement in response. This direction of movement follows a fundamental law: the child trains itself in those qualities by which it hopes to achieve significance in the family structure (Dreikurs, 1953, p. 41).

The main elements of the family constellation are sibling constellation, family values, family atmosphere, parental behavior, and the family role played by each child.

SIBLING CONSTELLATION

Competition

According to Adler (1969a), Dreikurs (1953), and Ferguson (1958), the wish to belong and to be accepted is a basic goal of human behavior. Bowlby (1969) called the motive of this behavior ***attachment.*** The search for a place or significant status in the group has been identified by Forgus and Shulman (1979) as a differentiation of the attachment motive, although other motives such as competence and security also are served by status within the group. Animal groups that have a social hierarchy or dominance rank order show a striving for dominance or status (Lorenz, 1952; Ferguson, 1976). Human groups show this same striving. Competition among family members is understood in this sense by Adlerians; it is a striving for perceived available places in the group against those who are perceived as competitors for these places.

Open fighting between children is not necessarily a sign of real sibling rivalry. Two children may fight with each other for other reasons; such as, to win parental attention, to express anger at the parents in indirect ways, or to fulfill role enactments ("boys are expected to fight"). Competition which represents the struggle for a significant place in the family is more often shown by differences between siblings in behavioral paths, traits, and interests.

An important effect of competition is not only that siblings will develop diverse interests and traits, but also that the success of a sibling in one area may have a discouraging effect upon the competitor. One child may misbehave ***just because*** the sibling is so successful in winning parental approval through obedience. If one is an excellent student, the competitor, rather than take second place, may decide not even to try to perform well in school. The fact of competition results in a diversity of behaviors within the family—a Darwinian variation/selection process in which the child selects what seems to be the most useful variation.

Birth Order

Personality Characteristics and Birth Order. Adler's classic description of the effects of birth order contains the following features: (1) Children of the same family are not born into the same environment. The second child is born into a different psychological situation than the first. (2) It is not the actual order of birth, but the psychological situation which is important. If the eldest is feeble-minded, the second may assume the role of a first-born. (3) Marked difference in age between siblings tends to reduce competition between them. (4) Birth order is not an absolute determinant, only an influence (Adler, 1964 a., pp. 96-120).

Ordinal position refers to the actual order in which the child was born; i.e., first, second, third...tenth, eleventh, and so on. ***Birth order*** refers to five positions that Adler described which tend to have recognizable characteristics later on in life. These are the ***first-born, second, middle, youngest,*** and ***only.*** In our discussion of these positions, it is important to remember that ***psychological*** position is the important determinant (Shulman & Mosak, 1977). One child may be an only child for several years and may then find a change to the position of a first-born. The first may be overrun by the younger sibling who then becomes, in some respect, like a first born. The oldest may then function like a second born. By reason of physical illness or frailty, an older child may actually function like a youngest.

Each of these five basic positions tends to have certain characteristics related to the unique early experiences of each position. No position is better than another. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Each has its tasks and the adult traits reflect how these tasks were answered in childhood. The most frequent characteristics of each ordinal position in normal family structure are as follows:

> ***Only Child.*** The only child never had a rival. Peers tend to be curiosities rather than competitors. However, the only child may have been pampered and never learned to share. The only child may share some features with the first born, or obversely, with the youngest.
>
> ***First-born.*** The first-born once had it all to himself/herself and would still prefer to be the first and foremost. He/she tends to feel entitled to rank and is often achievement oriented.
>
> ***Second Child.*** The second child started late and has to catch up. Someone always seems ahead of him/her, a standard bearer against whom one measures oneself.
>
> ***Middle Child.*** The middle child has a standard bearer in front and a pursuer in the rear. Surrounded by competitors, the middle child may feel squeezed into a small area in search for significance.
>
> ***Youngest Child.*** The trail is well broken for the youngest and the guidelines are clear. The youngest is never dethroned. On the other hand, he/she has much ground to cover in order to catch up.

Certain adult traits can often be found in these birth order positions. The first born is often "a great believer in power and the laws" (Adler, 1964a, p. 102). He/she tends to be conservative toward change, perhaps somewhat elitist in views. The second child is a "runner," looking for some area of success, more revolutionary in outlook, more willing to follow another's lead. The middle child tends to be sensitive to mistreatment or unfairness. The middle child is afraid of missing out on its share. The youngest, who often sets out to catch up to the others, will be very ambitious. If one has decided not to pursue, one continues in a dependent role. The only child is usually congenial and charming and has social behavior intended to please rather than to out do.

Characteristic variations also are depending upon whether the child experiences self as "successful" or not. A "failed" first born tends to give up completely. A second child, who does not feel able to catch up to the pacemaker, switches to an area of endeavor which does not compete with the eldest. A failed middle child is embittered because of being squeezed out of significance. Life is unfair. The failed youngest remains baby-like—assuming dependent and helpless roles. The failed only child is like the failed baby. Other factors making for variation including age difference, family size, and gender will be discussed shortly.

All of these so-called characteristics are probabilities only. Each case is an individual matter and may differ more or less from the mean.

Toman (1969) had something to say about each of these birth order positions and differentiates them further. Thus, a first born male with younger brothers is described by Toman as

> ... the leader, the master of other men, whether he shows it by force or cunning ... He is on good terms with other males, especially when they are not older brothers themselves ... He tends to be a good worker when he chooses. (1969, p. 24)

On the other hand, the oldest brother of sisters is

> ... a friend of the girls and ladies, whether sincerely or with tongue in cheek. Love of the tender sex is the most important of all concerns ... He may be a good worker as long as there are female colleagues or co-workers ... (1969, p. 44)

Toman described many more traits than these for each of the eleven sibling positions he discussed. These positions are

- oldest brother of brother(s)
- youngest brother of brother(s)
- oldest brother of sister(s)
- youngest brother of sister(s)
- oldest sister of sister(s)
- twins
- younger sister of sister(s)
- oldest sister of brother(s)
- youngest sister of brother(s)
- intermediary sibling positions
- only child

Toman warned that he was describing broad generalities and that each individual case will have it unique characteristics; e.g., siblings form subgroups, age differences may be so large that sibling relationships were not competitive, or special events may have had an important influence. Nevertheless, he believed he could predict personality traits from birth order. A reading of the Toman book will be rewarding to anyone interested in birth order factors and many of his readers will recognize themselves in his descriptions.

Forer (1976) offered views similar to Toman and, in addition, has studied birth order effects in her own clinical practice, on choice of a vocation, on sociality, choice of mate, and sexual behavior.

Social Role

Social role theory offers another useful way of viewing these birth order positions. Role is an ***"organized set of behaviors that belong to an identifiable position in the social structure and these behaviors are activated when the role is occupied"*** (Sarbin & Allen, 1968, p. 54). The psychological position of the child is its role ***location***—the way the child locates itself in the family structure. Each role carries with it a set of ***expectations*** about behavior and a set of ***demands*** for ***enactment*** of the role. How well the child enacts the role (***role skills***) and how satisfied it is with the role (***self-role***

congruence) become important in influencing the relationship between birth order and adult traits.

Factors Which Influence Birth Order and Sibling Constellation

Age Difference. Competition between siblings is most keen when they are close in age and diminishes with age difference. As a rule of thumb, children who are seven or more years apart are not in competition with each other. In a two-child family with such an age difference between them, each child will tend to function more as an only child. Much older siblings may play parental roles for the younger child.

Family Size. The rule that only five basic birth order positions exist holds true for large families as well. The family perceptions tend to classify large groups of children into older and younger groups. Thus, the third child may actually function as the first born of the second group. The technique of eliciting the family constellation will show how large families can be sorted into groups. Age difference and gender are the two most important sorting factors in normal families.

Extra-familial Competitors. In some families, children from outside the immediate family may play the role of competitors. A cousin or younger sibling of a parent may live in the house or close by and may be a competitor for the favor of one of the parenting figures. Family rearrangements, as in divorce and remarriage, may throw together children who now begin to compete. Each case is individual.

Gender Difference. In some families, the division of role demands is so complete that siblings of different sex have little need to compete with each other. The oldest girl may have her place as a first born and the oldest of the boys also may function as a first born. Each has a different role and can receive positive reinforcement from the parents for this distinction. In families where an only girl is among a group of boys, or ***vice versa,*** the position of the "one and only" is usually unique; he/she is valued for himself/herself because he/she is the only one of a kind and need not compete with siblings for a place. As Toman (1969) pointed out, relationships with sibling of the opposite sex influences the choice of a mate later in life. An older brother with younger sisters will tend to be more protective and more dominant with females later than will a younger brother with older sisters.

Death and Survivorship. A child that has lived long enough to become a significant sibling in the family and then dies, does not usually disappear from the sibling constellation. More commonly, such a child is idealized and remains an ever present standard of comparison. Because idealization elevates the status of the dead child, the surviving sibling often feels inferior by comparison. The dead child may become woven into family myths and thus affect family values and family atmosphere. The survivor may experience a ***role demand*** to somehow compensate for the death of the sibling.

> One man recalled that his older brother had been the favorite child, a good student, obedient and musically talented. The brother died of an acute illness. A relative said to him, "Now, you'll have to be a good son to your parent." His feeling was, "I'll never be able to do all those things my brother did and now I'll always be a disappointment to my parents."

Special Siblings. Various factors may create a special role for a sibling. Mental retardation, brain damage, physical defect, and prolonged illness are examples of factors which lead to a special role, requiring more attention and concern from parents. The well sibling ordinarily does not feel threatened by the sick one in these circumstances, but may feel somewhat left out when parental attention is focused on the special sibling.

Another special role occurs when a sibling is unusually talented and therefore valuable to the family for that trait alone. Special siblings do not have to compete for place; their status is assured.

We have previously mentioned that a cousin or a younger aunt or uncle who lives close by can become competitors. Family myths provide other special roles for children—the posthumous child, the first child born after several miscarriages, the child named after a dead family member, the child born out of wedlock, the child born with a caul, the child whose mother died at birth—may all receive special treatment from family members.

Favoritism. Being the favorite of a parent sometimes creates a special position. Sigmund Freud said about favoritism, "A man who has been the indisputable favorite of his mother keeps for life the feeling of a conqueror, that confidence of success that often induces real success" (Freud, 1940-1952, *Vol. 12*, p. 26). On the other hand, favoritism may weigh heavily upon the child if the parental demands are more intense for the favorite than for the others. Thus, the favorite may feel more liked or, conversely, more obligated.

Roles Available

In Chapter 1, we introduced the concept of the family as an ecological unit in which family members occupied available spaces, divided territories, and so were able to live with each other in one space yet pursue their individual goals. One small patch of prairie can hold many different species of animals provided they do not intrude upon each other too much and provide some benefits to each other. The same is true of the family, where the values and atmosphere define the available ecological niches. A family may have room for one good student, one helpful domestic child, one black-sheep child, and so on. If a second child tries to fulfill the same niche as the first born, the second child intrudes upon a sibling's territory and territorial conflict ensues which all too often does not satisfy anyone. The role of "black sheep" can be a most satisfying family role for the child who enacts it. It is a dramatic attention-getter; a way of being impressive and important in the family. The choice of this role usually means that the child is ambition to impress and demonstrate power, and has discovered that misbehavior (and perhaps retaliation) are suitable for this purpose. Some roles are available to more than one sibling. For example, for a family to have more than one black sheep is usually possible. At other times, however, one sibling may so outshine the others in some way that the others give up and do not compete in this area at all. Some roles are more available to one sex than the other. In a family that believes "boys will be boys," mischievous behavior in a boy may be more reinforced by the parents than such behavior in a girl. On the other hand, verbal complaining and tears may be tolerated more in a girl, depending upon the values of the parents.

Thus are available roles determined and constructed; and they are perhaps the most impressive example of the creativity of the child as he/she builds his/her life.

Research on Birth Order

Early research on birth order often failed because researchers made no allowance at all for actual birth order or psychological position. Later, more sophisticated research showed some general support for Adler's theories, but even in these studies, ordinal position rather than actual birth order is treated as the variable. In one study Hilton showed that first borns are more likely to seek approval and help from their mothers and the latter are more likely to offer it (Hilton, 1967). Nisbet (1968) found that first borns are less likely to participate in dangerous sports. A study of psychiatric problems in a boot camp showed that only children were more likely than first borns to consult the psychiatrist, to be diagnosed as psychoneurotic, and to be discharged from service. Diagnoses of first borns was almost equally divided between psychoneurosis and personality disorder (Taintor, 1970). Harris's (1964) study comparing first borns and later children showed that the former have a different cognitive style from the latter. Another study (Hall & Barger, 1964) showed that in two child families (both being males), first borns tended to be conservative and interested in administrative and supervisory tasks. Younger siblings were more flexible and somewhat more gregarious. The subject population consisted of college students from intact Protestant families and is therefore a limited sample.

Altus (1966) treated birth order and ordinal position as if they were the same thing in his study. Since the two categories often are identical, especially in small families with first born sons, no surprise comes when studies on first born sons often corroborate Adler's theory. Another example of this type of research is the study by Herrell (1972). He hypothesized that first borns, because they have the right attitude for positions of power, should be over-represented among military leaders, should tolerate the military structure better than later borns (being less rebellious), and, if unhappy in subordinate roles, would be over-represented among those diagnosed as neurotic in military mental hygiene clinics. Herrell found support for these hypotheses.

Effective research on birth order will have to take into account many more variables: the actual ordinal position, the psychological position, gender of the children and parental response to them.

One study has taken into account at least one factor in addition to birth order (Mendelsohn et al., 1974). Heterosexual pairing among siblings was studied for its effects on adult heterosexual behavior. These authors found that the closer the heterosexual dyad duplicated the sibling experience of the dyad, the more likely the dyad was to be successful (an observation noted earlier by Toman, 1962).

Toman's (1969) study, as mentioned earlier, is the most extensive one on birth order and it does take the previously mentioned factors of psychological position, gender, and parental response into account. In addition, Toman recognized that large sibling groups became divided into older and younger, that age differences of over six years create a break between groups, and that loss of a parent in early life significantly influences the whole process. A study by Croake and Olson (1977) offered some evidence that both Adler's and Toman's theories have validity as determinants of personality patterns. Using the MMPI, these researchers found significant differences on various scales between all given birth order positions. They examined fifteen different combinations of brothers and sisters and found some verification for Toman's claims that the different birth order positions would have different traits, although the MMPI descriptive statement did not really match Toman's descriptions.

FAMILY VALUES—EFFECT ON SIBLING TRAITS

Family values is the term used to denote those values to which a response is demanded of the child by the family "authorities." They are usually shared by both parents. Where paternal and maternal values conflict and each parent demands a response, the response of the child depends upon with which parent the child chooses to identify, which parent is the accepted authority, and the range of alternative responses available to the child.

Family values define the issues of significance in the family. Some family values are shared by the community at large, others are unique to the family. Values are not always openly expressed but become clear to the child through interaction with the parental models. Indeed, the actual proclaimed values may be at variance with the real values and ideals of the models. Family values represent ideals and therefore demands upon the child. In some families good human relations may be a value, in others material gain. Intellectual accomplishment, social prestige, propriety, morality, rugged masculinity, and polite behavior are all examples of common family values. Some values are sex-linked, i.e., in some families men are supposed to be strong and silent while women are supposed to be emotional and talkative.

If the pressure to live up to the values is intense and the values seem excessive to the child, then he/she finds self ***oppressed*** by the values and may react by rebellion, surface submission and inner rebellion, rationalization, or other devices for dealing with an oppressive demand. Nevertheless, a response must be given to each family value that the child perceives as applying. He/she may accept and try to fulfill or may reject the value and may choose from among the thousands of techniques that human beings have developed to deal with their own ideals, those which seem to help one preserve a sense of worth in the face of an unrealized ideal.

In discussing both family values and family atmosphere Dreikurs wrote

> The family pattern by no means ***determines*** the child's behavior. It may induce quite opposite behavior patterns. Nevertheless, children of the same family . . . show an inclination to similar behavior, developing characteristic values and moral concepts, ***especially when these are clearly defined and accepted by both parents*** . . . similarities of character traits are an expression of the family atmosphere. (Dreikurs, 1957a, p. 9)

The particular role accepted by the child will influence which family values become more important and which less important. If the child has selected a compliant role, then obedience and pleasing others becomes a role demand for the child. For another child, impressing others may be a role demand. The child expects self to live up to the values accepted and his/her self-esteem is determined by abilities to meet these role demands.

Since values are demands as well as ideals, they act as guiding lines for aspiration and behavior. They have what Lewin (1935) called ***positive valence*** which give rise to movement toward the desired ideal. Values provide what Adler (1958) called ***the meaning of life.*** Mistaken or aberrant values can be learned from parental models or can be the result of the child's misinterpretation of parental values. What the parent is trying to teach and what the child learns are sometimes very discrepant as will be described later. Even if parents make no attempt to teach values, their own modeling behavior and their interaction with the child will present unmistakable values.

Unsatisfactory Values

Unclear (because of inconsistency) values provide unsatisfactory guiding lines and require the child to look elsewhere for its ideals. Unsatisfactory ideals are those which are obviously inappropriate even to the limited perception of the child. If the child sees a parent struggling and suffering to achieve a certain value, such as a spotless house or exemplary religious piety, the child may well consider such an ideal unsatisfactory and simply reject it, perhaps while paying lip service to it. We have previously described how the child who finds values excessive becomes oppressed. The more excessive the demand, the more discouraging it is for the child and vice versa. In these cases, the values also become unsatisfactory. On the other hand, the child may find a parental value unsatisfactory because it is insufficient, as when the child chooses stricter religious values than the parents and outdoes them in piety and ritual.

Contradictory Values

Contradictory values are cases in which the pursuit of one value negates the pursuit of an opposite value of equal significance. Common examples can be seen when the parents model diametrically opposed values and the child wants to please both of them. Walker and Belove (1982) have called this the ***loyalty dilemma.*** Another example is when the child has acquired two conflicting values such as the desire to please the parent and the desire to have complete authority over its own behavior. Such contradictory and conflicting values often lead to remarkably creative behavior as the child juggles responses to these demands and finds more or less constructive solutions.

> One man (an only child) described how his mother disapproved of rowdy behavior and did not even want him to participate in athletics. His father had been known as a town athlete and took pride in the son's athletic achievements. He tells that he went to church with his mother on Sunday and on returning home, skipped lunch so that he could immediately go to the ball field in time for the scheduled games. He adds that although he was on the basketball team all through high school and college, his mother never came to a game. In his turn, he never told his mother when he would play and never discussed athletics with her.

Sometimes, no constructive solution is apparent and the contradictory values become highly unsatisfactory. One situation of this type has been named the ***double-bind*** (Bateson, 1972). The double bind is a paradox which occurs in a relationship which by nature requires cooperation, such as that between a parent and child. It is created when the parent gives a verbal directive (makes a demand) to the child and then contradicts the directive by non-verbal behavior (the counter-demand). Now the child finds attempts to win parental approval unrewarding but feels trapped in the situation. Eventually the child becomes discouraged and stops trying to cooperate or simply does whatever must be done to escape the worst of the parental disapproval.

As can be seen, the double bind is a "no win" situation. Bateson et al. (1956) offered an example:

> A young man approaches his mother and impulsively puts his arms around her, whereupon the mother stiffens. He withdraws his arms and she asks, "Don't you love me anymore?" He blushes and she says, "Dear, you must not be so easily embarrassed and afraid of your feelings."

Bateson et al. offered this type of contradictory communication as one example of a child experience often found in the background of schizophrenics.

Another avenue open to the child where the demands of one parent contradict the values of the other, is for the child to play one parent off against the other, inducing the parents to fight among themselves; or by complaining to one about the other, win an ally. Thus the child can at least please one parent. Sometimes the child will rebel against both sets of demands and conclude that trying to please either is not worth the effort.

Values are often a function of role location and thus change with each situation. The values of a small child are largely different from those of an adolescent and these differ again from those of an adult. They change with age, environment, economic situation, cultural demands, and so forth. We are here concerned with those values which are part of the child's family situation and which continue to exist, though in changed form, in adult life.

The change in form is often a change in the symbols and behavior which express the value. If morality is the family value, the child may demonstrate it by compliant and conventional behavior; the adolescent may depreciate the parents' expression of morality and may join a religious sect and follow its rules scrupulously; the same person, now adult, may devote self to searching out and exposing corruption in religious and charitable organizations. The value—morality—remains the same. How the value is expressed and symbolized differs.

FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

Each family tends to have an atmosphere of its own which grows out of relationships and values of the family and is influenced by intercurrent events and the position of the family in the outside world. Some families live in harmony, others in conflict. In some families the members are in conflict with each other at all times except when an outside danger threatens. Some families have a democratic, some an autocratic, and others an anarchic atmosphere. Sometimes family members are close to each other, sometimes distant. They may help or ignore each other. In some, the atmosphere is confusing, contradictory, secretive, hostile, gloomy, or despondent. Initiative may be encouraged or discouraged. The overall theme may be tragic, comic, or dramatic. Oppressive standards may hang like a cloud over the family so that everyone feels like a failure.

Events which affect the family atmosphere include any sudden change such as sickness, death, divorce, economic disruption or move to a new environment. These changes may affect any or all of the three qualities we use to describe family atmosphere: ***mood, order,*** and ***relationships.***

Mood

Mood refers to the overall emotional tone present in the family most of the time and as already mentioned, it is generally an expression of the mood of one or both parents. An over-anxious parent can spread fear and tension by contagion. A disapproving, blaming parent can produce an atmosphere of mutual criticism; while a calm and supportive parent can promote a sense of security and confidence.

> One man recalled the dark mood of the whole family during his childhood. His father could not find a job during the economic depression and was frequently drunk. Father also used to say that they were all unlucky and were all destined for Hell. Mother used to cry and worry all the time. He tried to help his family by taking the coal bucket to the railroad yards to look for pieces of coal that had fallen off trains so the family could have heat in the house. He recalls that he always expected some doom at any moment.

Order

Order refers to the hierarchical relationships and the progression of events. An authoritarian hierarchy in the family is one example of a family order. Inconsistent discipline or limit setting is another example. Frequent changes in the power structure of the family, divorce and death of a parent all affect the stability of the family order. A stable order more often provides security than an unstable one.

> One woman remembers that her father, a commodities broker, was either wealthy or poor. When he did well, his mood was expansive and everyone in the family seemed happy. When he suffered reverses, he was sad and distant and the woman recalls being quiet and sad,

but trying to cheer up her father. She never knew from day to day how things would go and used to wait fearfully for him to come home. Even when things went well for a period of time, she dreaded the thought that her father might again lose his fortune. Father finally died penniless, leaving her with a deep fear of financial insecurity.

Relationships

Relationships refer to the consistent forms of interaction present in the family. A parent can consistently withhold love as a form of disapproval. Parents can be strict or overly possessive. They may show affection openly or be distant and cool. They may play favorites and indulge one child while rejecting another. They can also be mainly concerned with their own interests and pay little attention to the emotional needs of the children. Mother and Father may be in conflict with each other leaving children to feel pulled between the parents. Power contests may lead to attempts to establish dominance rather than mutual cooperation. These relationships become prototypes of all human relationships for the child and the manner of relating the child learns at home is often carried into its later life.

In Table 2.1 is a list of various types of family atmospheres and their opposites which have significant influence on the development of life style.

TABLE 2.1
Qualities of the Family Atmosphere Which Influence Life Style

MOOD	
Anxious	Calm
Excitable	Placid
Hostile	Friendly
Discouraged	Hopeful
Unhappy	Cheerful
ORDER	
Chaotic	Orderly
Strict	Permissive
Authoritarian	Democratic
Inconsistant	Consistent
Arbitrary	Logical
Confusion	Clarity
Might Makes Right	Ethical Standards
RELATIONSHIPS	
Distant	Intimate, affectionate
Competitive	Cooperative
Rejecting	Accepting
Blaming	Understanding
Concealed Feeling	Openness
Conflictual	Harmonious

Dewey Classification

Dewey (1971, 1978) has described a number of family atmospheres: the ***rejective*** atmosphere is characterized by parents who constantly criticize and disapprove; the ***authoritarian*** atmosphere is rigid and demands compliance while it denies individual initiative; ***martyrdom*** extols nobility through a display of suffering. The model suffers at the hands of another and achieves a form of moral superiority, thus gaining status. The ***inconsistent*** atmosphere limits open expression of thoughts or feelings; the ***hopeless*** atmosphere fosters discouragement, passivity, resignation and pessimism; the ***overprotective*** atmosphere does not allow children to learn to face the consequences of their own behavior or learn necessary social skills. Other atmospheres described by Dewey are ***pitying, high-standards, materialistic, disparaging, inharmonious, disorderly*** and ***excessively orderly.*** In our opinion the outcome is not always as Dewey seems to suggest. The child's own subjective conclusions are the determining factor in the outcome.

The child's early experiences with the family atmosphere influence what it will expect later in life, and especially that part of the life style which in Chapter 1 we called the ***world view.*** As we experienced life before, so we generally expect it to be in the future.

PARENTAL BEHAVIOR

Parents as Models

Parents not only interact with the child, they provide models (as do other significant adults and older children). The function of the model is to display varieties of behavior to the child who thus learns various techniques of behavior and their consequences. How men behave, how women behave, how adults relate to each other, how they meet crises, what they consider important, and what they consider proper all are displayed to the view of the child who chooses what part of the stance and behavior he/she will imitate and what will be rejected. If the models display a narrow or distorted range of behavior, the child has little opportunity to learn alternatives and tries to use the little information learned to deal with the situation. Thus, a first-born son with an indulgent and submissive mother and a dictatorial tyrannical father is very likely to become a rebellious dictatorial child himself, demanding the mother's submission and constantly enraging the father who then punishes the child and further reinforces the child's overvaluation of the importance of being the more powerful one in a relationship.

Imitation—Positive and Negative. The child may pattern self after a parent, may decide to be the opposite, or may select from each parent traits desired to emulate, always searching for values, attitudes, and techniques that enhance self and one's perceived ability to cope with life. Much imitation takes place outside the conscious awareness of the child and even the adult may not recognize that the child is imitating parental behavior. Bandura and Walters (1963) have shown that much social learning takes place through observation and imitation. Infinite variations in patterning are possible. The first born tends to pattern self after the parent of the same sex, or may pattern itself according to the values and role demands of the parent with whom the closest affiliation is established. The child may become convinced he/she cannot match the attainments of the desirable model, may fruitlessly continue attempts to do so, or may give up and switch to another form of behavior. The second child may choose to imitate the alternate parent or to try to overrun the first in imitating the same sex parent, or at least to imitate those behaviors of the parent that the first has ignored. The child may ally self with one parent against another or may even decide to outdo the parents in the same behavior.

Not only behavior is imitated, but also values and standards. Thus, a child may accept the parental dictum that children "should" be obedient, but, defining self as a naughty child, may be disobedient. The child also may reject the standards, yet imitate the behavior.

Complementary Patterning. A complementary relationship is reciprocal and mutually satisfying to parent and child.

> An uneducated parent may encourage educational achievement in the child. By attaining education the child wins parental approval. In complementary patterning the value, not the behavior, is imitated.

Rebellion. Four different types of patterning may be seen in rebellious children. The child may reject both the values and behavior of the parents. The child may, on the other hand, accept the parental standards for behavior but reject their demands for conformity to those behaviors. The child may instead devise behaviors for meeting these standards or may simply define self as not being able to meet them. He/she also may misinterpret the kind of behaviors necessary to meet the standards. A third pattern for rebellion stems from the fact that rebellious behavior sometimes wins stronger reinforcement than conformity (parental attention and concern). A fourth pattern is actually a pseudo-rebellion in that it is a form of imitation. A boy may imitate a demanding, authoritarian, argumentative father and may thereby come into conflict with him.

In all cases of rebellion, the child perceives some advantage to self from so behaving. Parents may unconsciously reinforce the behavior or the behavior may give the child a feeling of power and self-esteem, even a measure of retaliation if the child is angry at the parents.

Identification. Adlerians do not use the word identification in the same sense as psychoanalytic theory which sees identification as an ego mechanism for creating an internal ego structure. Adlerians are more inclined to use a social learning model and therefore prefer the concept of ***imitation,*** of following a guiding line.

Parental Behavior Toward the Child and the Outcome

Our theory of human behavior leads us to believe that the parent-child interaction is a dyadic process with mutual feedback; therefore, the parent and child influence each other's behavior in the transaction between them. The private goals and expectancies of each person influences each one's perception of and reactions to the other. The parent who expects to be disappointed in the child is quick to perceive evidence to support that expectation and the child who expects to be rejected by the parent will equally quickly perceive evidence of rejection and often they act to arrange it in line with Merton's (1948) hypothesis of self-fulfilling prophecy. Thus, each party may experience the expected result before the other has actually done anything to warrant such a conclusion. Since each assumes that the expected has already happened (or is at least imminent), each behaves as if it has actually happened. Thus, we respond to what we think people are doing, thinking, or expecting or to what we think they will do as much as to their actual behavior. We attribute motives more in line with our own expectations rather than with reality. Relationships are full of these expectations, misattributions, and faulty conclusions. The behavior of the child in the context of the family is the result of the child's subjective appraisal of what parents seem to be doing. For this reason, we discuss and describe the parents' behavior sometimes as if that were the "cause" of the child's response and sometimes as if the child's own inner perceptions were the "cause" of its own behavior. Of course, the child's behavior is also a "cause" of the parents' response to it (Mosak, 1980). The mutual behavioral interaction provides invitation and feedback for each.

Actual Parental Behavior and Its Perception by the Child. A direct one to one relationship between the actual parental behavior and the child's experience of it does not exist. A parent may actually favor a child, yet the child may experience the parent's behavior as rejecting. A parent may be punitive but the child may feel the parent is justified. Another parent may be indulgent and yet the child may feel deprived. The child's perception of the parent's behavior toward the child is the stimulus for the response. Parental behavior is thus assigned "meanings" by the child according to the child's cognitive system.

For this reason, parents are often surprised at how the child responds to them. They may consciously intend to reinforce one set of behaviors, while actually they reinforce another. One common mistake parents make is to give "negative attention," i.e., attention for misbehavior rather than for desirable behavior. The parental attention, even though it consists of scolding and admonition, is a reinforcer.

A mother in a family education center reported an experience with her young child. She entered the kitchen and saw her child playing on the floor with some dried beans. Immediately worried, she said in a warning voice, "Don't put any of those beans up your nose!" She then went about her activities. When she returned, the child's nose was full of beans and she had to take him to the doctor to have them extracted.

Another mother wanted to teach her children to share and share alike. She tried to teach this value by very carefully giving each child the same toys and equal portions of food at the dinner table. The children did not learn to share. Instead they learned to watch each other to make certain that the other never got a larger share of anything.

A father who had been poor as a child wanted his son to have all the playthings he, himself, had wanted but been denied in his childhood. He bought countless toys for his son and was puzzled when the son broke, lost, or ignored them. The son did not value items that came to him so easily and could always be replaced. The father felt unappreciated and the son felt misunderstood.

Specific Perceptions of Behavior and Outcome. The socializing task of parents probably includes the following (adapted from Horney, 1966): (1) to provide safety and security for the child; (2) to provide it with a feeling of worth; (3) to provide an atmosphere of emotional warmth; (4) to guide the child, yet permit it the freedom to explore and make its own errors and learn from them; (5) to set limits where necessary; (6) to permit some friction so that the experience of conflict engenders problem solving behavior; and (7) to train the child in the value of cooperation. Parents use various dimensions of behavior in their attempts to perform these tasks and the child's responses are to the parental behavior as he/she perceives them. Some common dimensions of parental behavior and typical responses by the child are listed in Table 2.2. One must keep in mind that these responses by the child have a high order of probability only and also can be different from the ones listed.

TABLE 2.2
Parental Behavior and Probable Responses by Child

Dimension of Parental Behavior as Perceived by Child	Typical Responses by Child
Accepting	Positive self-image
Rejecting	Negative self-image—may look elsewhere for acceptance
Authoritarian	Submits—seeks to please or rebels—seeks power
Laissez-faire	Seeks guidance and limits
Available	Feels closer to parent
Unavailable	Feels isolated—looks elsewhere
Consistency	More trust
Inconsistency	Distrust and feeling that life is unpredictable—may become excessively orderly
Overprotection	Fearfulness or resistance to limits
Overindulgence	Does not learn to discipline self. Expects service from others

TABLE 2.2 (Continued)

Dimension of Parental Behavior as Perceived by Child	Typical Responses by Child
Excessive demands for achievement	Resentment and feelings of inferiority—becomes discouraged—may continue to try or may reject achievement orientation
Excessive moral demands	Feels like a "bad" person. May set excessive moral standards for others and depreciate them.
Excessive strictness	Seeks to please or rebels. Covert rebellion is common
Excessive criticism	Feels rejected and misunderstood. Becomes discouraged or rejects the critic
Lack of faith in the child	Tries to prove self to parent/or loses faith in self
Warmth	Feels accepted and loved
Coldness	Feels neglected or may become cold and distant himself/herself
Nurturing	Feels loved and can give love
Non-nurturing	Seeks love, may not learn how to give it
Competing	Becomes a competitor
Cooperating	Becomes a cooperator
Encouraging	Positive response
Discouraging	Tendency to give up

Attitudes Reinforced by Parental Behavior

Certain basic attitudes are considered important by Adlerians. Parental behavior influences whether or not these attitudes will develop. Dreikurs (1957b, 1973) considered these attitudes essential for human cooperation and their counterparts disruptive to it.

Table 2.3 lists these important attitudes and their polar encounterparts.

TABLE 2.3

Important Attitude Polarities Influenced by Parental Reinforcement

(Adapted from Dreikurs, 1957b, 1973, p. 103)

SOCIAL FEELING	**ANIMOSITY**
—feeling of belonging	—alienation
—fellow feeling	—egocentricity/self-elevation
—contributing	—getting/taking
—cooperation	—competition
Confidence in others	***Distrust and suspicion***
SELF-CONFIDENCE	**INFERIORITY FEELINGS**
self-reliance	—dependency
—optimism	—pessimism
—positive self-concept	—negative self-concept
—activity	—passivity
Courage	***Fear (discouragement)***

The attitudes on the left are considered healthy and prosocial. Those on the right are unhealthy and antisocial. These basis attitudes can be discovered during the assessment of the life style.

Empathy. In its original sense, empathy is ***Einfühlung,*** a primitive reflex process by which direct communication of an emotional state occurs between people. It does not necessarily mean sympathy. Sullivan uses the term to describe the way an infant can be affected by the emotional state of the caretaking adult; i.e., tension in the mother produces tension in the infant (Sullivan, 1953, p. 41). Thus the moods of parents have a direct effect on the moods of the children. This phenomenon is also often seen in clinical work. A person who is depressed tends to produce various emotional responses in the people around him/her, sometimes even depression. One who is hypomanic can produce feelings of excitement and elation in others. Experienced actors know how to deliberately produce emotional responses in the audience.

Through empathy, parents produce mood states in each other and in the children. Such mood states were previously discussed under ***family atmosphere.***

Parental Interaction

In their interaction with each other, parents provide models for human interaction, especially interaction between the sexes. The child learns from them how men and women treat each other. The child may notice that mother defers to father on the surface, but mother is the actual decision-maker in the family. The child can see the presence or absence of respect, warmth, love, and cooperation between parents. The child will tend, later in life, to desire for intimate relationship that which was thought to be good in the relationship between the child's parents and to avoid that which was thought to be bad. Parental interaction thus provides guidelines, role models, a view of marriage and parenthood, and specific interactive behavioral methods.

The emotional problems of the parents enter into their interaction with each other. A child can become caught up in the interaction between the parents with unfortunate consequences for self. One such outcome has been described by Lidz (1973) who found ***marital schism,*** a conflicted relationship between the parents, in the background of many schizophrenics. Family therapists such as Boszormenyi-Nagy (1972), Bowen (1978), Satir (1967), and Whitaker (1978) have discussed the effects of conflict between the parents on the adaptive behavior of the child.

Absent Parents

The absence of a parent removes an important socializing agent from the child's life. The effect of a parent's death depends to a great extent upon the age of the child at the time of death, the previous relationship between the parent and the child, the amount of change in the family's life situation (e.g., economic misfortune) that ensues from the death, and the presence or absence of other parenting figures who may act as substitutes. A parent's death is usually experienced as a loss and/or abandonment. The effect of divorce can be similar, although the absent parent is usually not permanently lost after divorce. In this situation, the child may be induced to take sides in the conflict. In all these cases, the family constellation changes and the child usually experiences new role demands. The dead parent may be idealized and by comparison, the remaining parent may seem inadequate. A parent's death or a divorce may permanently change the family atmosphere. Children often feel abandoned during the dislocation that follows either death or divorce. To be an orphan also confers a special role, which is sometimes reinforced by changed reactions (positive or negative) of the people around the child.

Ineffective Parents

Sometimes a parent is incapacitated by illness, perhaps becoming a pathetic figure, losing authority and becoming like a child in status. Family concerns may center around such a sick parent so that all are affected by the atmosphere of illness and incapacity. The illness of a previously dominant parent and the mate's reaction to it may reverse the previous order of the family. Such events in the life of the family tend to leave a permanent trace on the child.

Parents are sometimes rendered ineffective by other external circumstances. A dominant father may suffer business reverses, turn to alcohol, and lose the respect of mate and children. Immigrant parents, not knowing the language or customs of the new country, may be rejected as models by the child. In each case the child responds in its unique personal way to the picture presented by parental behavior. The effect on the child need not always be negative. The child's response to an ineffective parent may be a positive one; that is, the child chooses the parent as a negative model and trains self to be an effective and responsible person.

Single parent families, stepfamilies, and blended families have always been with us but the past few decades have seen some changes in the attitude toward divorce and remarriage. The cultural change is still new enough that we do not yet know what will be the eventual effect on family values. In the case of an unwed, by choice, mother with a single child, we do not yet know what special rules may apply.

Family Myths

Family myths are usually constructed by the parents and either accepted or rejected by the child. Parents may cultivate the myth that the family is superior to other families by reason of ancestry and background. A common myth may result from the idealization of a family member who has died. Thus, a dead sibling may be thought of as having been a perfect child and all the other siblings defective by comparison. A myth is a set of fictions the family attributes to itself, more or less shared by the majority of the family members. The example previously given under the topic "family myths" about the father who asserted that they were all destined to go to Hell is one example of a myth. Sometimes, the myth is held by the parents and resisted by one or all of the children. Parents who are actually only interested in themselves may claim that they are making sacrifices for the children.

> In one family the parents described themselves as being cooperative, caring, warm, and sensitive. This self-description was belied by the behavior of the children. The oldest was exceedingly competitive and dictatorial, the second felt unloved, and the youngest felt she received no guidance. Such sibling behavior is unlikely had the parents actually been as they described themselves. All the children were highly critical of the parents.

Sometimes, the clarification and disclosure of the family myths are strongly resisted by family members.

Family Secrets

Family secrets consist of information that is known to some or all of the family members but concealed from the rest of the world. Common secrets involve a secret about a sick parent or child or an embarrassing fact. Thus, the existence of a retarded child in an institution, the fact that a parent is psychotic and has to be hospitalized from time to time or that father has spent time in jail may lead the family members to conceal such information from the world at large. The result is a feeling of conspiracy which creates distance between the family members and outsiders. Such behavior is reinforced by parents who instruct the children not to reveal secrets to neighbors. One result may be to enhance family unity, but it may also lead family members to depreciate themselves—to feel there is something wrong with them.

> A young woman had always felt that her family was different from the other people in the small town in which they lived. Her parents seldom entertained, did not encourage her to bring home playmates and always seemed secretive. She and her younger brother had been brought up in the Episcopalian Church, but her father seldom came to church and her mother always seemed angry at Father because of this. She considered herself Father's favorite and argued with her mother. She did not understand why Father did not defend himself. Brother was Mother's favorite and complied with her wishes. One day, a message came from New York that Father's brother had died. She then recalled that the brother had once visited years earlier when she was a small child, but in the intervening years no one in her family had ever mentioned that Father had relatives. Intrigued, she obtained addresses from her father and traveled to New York where she discovered a dozen relatives. She also discovered that her father had been born a Jew and that he had decided to deliberately conceal his background in deference to the wishes of his Christian wife. The family dynamics now became more

clear to her. She confronted her parents and declared that she refused to live a secret life anymore. She moved to New York and declared herself a Jewess—thus continuing to oppose her mother and champion her father.

Other Parent Figures

When extended families live in proximity, often enough parental figures are available so that each child may feel favored and experience a close relationship with an adult. Grandparents, maiden aunts, bachelor uncles, and much older siblings can all act as parental figures and provide models. A child may prefer a grandparent to a parent as a model. Adults, or even children, outside the home also may become models. Female school teachers are common models for little girls. In the determination of the family constellation, taking such models into account is always important.

FAMILY *ROLE* PLAYED BY EACH CHILD

As previously mentioned, the social role is an organized set of behaviors which belong to an identifiable position in the family. In the common family structure, parents play recognizable parental roles, sometimes divided along gender lines. Differences in roles between male and female children usually follow commonly accepted cultural patterns and children often, but not always, imitate the gender behaviors modeled by the same-sexed parent. The ecological structure of the family offers several different role locations for children, each of which provides a more or less acceptable amount of status and security for the child. Some roles receive more approval from parents than others. Some roles require more intelligence or more talent than others and not all children can meet these role demands. Some roles have more power to influence the environment than others. Some provide more self-esteem. Some roles more suitable for a small child are maladaptive if carried into adult life. Roles found in some families are not found in other families because they may be excluded by the family structure. In general, the more authoritarian and rigid the family atmosphere, the smaller will be the variety of roles found in it. The range of a role may extend over all or most behaviors of a child. However, specific behaviors may be limited to specific situations, e.g., the child behaves one way with mother, another with father, and a third way in school. Behaviors the child chooses must provide some reward or the child will never develop them. Roles and their associated behavior develop out of the child's responses to the "givens" of the situation and are fostered by imitation and reinforcement.

A role is usually given a shorthand label which suggests its main characteristics. All the birth orders are such labels since each birth order suggests that the person will display certain characteristics. Thus, traits such as responsibility and bossiness cluster more often with the first born position than with others. The complexity of roles can be seen in the permutations that surround one frequent family value—the request of the parents for compliance from the children. The following are all varieties of compliance roles:

> The good child who wants to please
>
> The child who is compliant on the surface but resents it
>
> The child who obeys out of fear
>
> The child who is compliant in order to get attention and who misbehaves to get attention if compliance doesn't work
>
> The child who is good in order to have higher status than the sibling who is naughty
>
> The child who rejects compliance as low status behavior and misbehaves and defies in order to increase feeling of status
>
> The child who complies with stated values in order to outdo the parents and gain dominance over them, as in the child who becomes more pious than the parents and feels entitled to criticize them.

Family Stories and Relation to Role Behaviors

In some families, stories are told about one member which suggest the role the family anticipates for that member. Stories such as "How Mary won the most beautiful child contest when she was five," or "How Mother almost died when Charlie was born," if repeated often enough, create a set of expectations. Perhaps Mary will feel that she is expected to be especially pretty or Charlie may feel that he was nearly the death of Mother. The stories are "history" and become woven into the child's image of self and his/her powers or destiny.

> A fearful, socially insecure young man was often told by his grandmother that when he was three years old, he was so fearful that he ran from any animal he saw on the farm where they lived. She would gleefully tell him that he would run from tiny goslings (who instinctively chase a fleeing animal) and cry because the goslings continued to run after him. The young man thought of himself as too cowardly to face up to anything.

Each family value allows for a variety of roles which serve that value in a positive or negative sense. Thus, each role is both an answer to a set of values (demands) and a way of finding a place in the family.

SUMMARY

Family constellation provides a picture of the microcosm in which the child develops. The givens of the FC are birth order, gender, parental models, family values, and family atmosphere. The child's own reaction can be seen in his/her behavior patterns, alliances, and rivalries, areas of success and failure (where it is encouraged and where discouraged), subjective views, conformity or rebellion, and the repertoire of roles developed within the family.

CHAPTER 3

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS (ER)

Although Munroe (1955) stated that Adler was the first to use early recollections as a projective technique, that is probably not true. Freud (1959) also used them that way, although with an entirely different emphasis as Ansbacher (1967) has pointed out. Freud emphasized that which was forgotten rather than that which was recalled and he viewed many early memories as "screens" behind which were important repressed events. Adler's own words best show his position on early recollections:

> The function of memory...[is] dominated by the necessity of adaptation. Without memories it would be impossible to exercise any precautions for the future. They are not fortuitous phenomena but speak clearly the language of encouragement and warning. There are no indifferent or nonsensical recollections... (Adler, 1957/1927, pp. 48-49)

Memory is thus an adaptive function of the mind. Memories are psychically determined for the purpose of aiding adaptation. They are used to select present and future choices of behavior; so they influence direction of goal movement. Memory functions like a vast evolutionary elaboration of a primitive orienting reflex to provide information about what direction of movement would have the most desirable results. Early childhood recollections were thought by Adler to be of especial significance since they showed the style of life in its origins and in its simplest expressions (Adler, 1958). For this reason they have become a valuable tool for eliciting the life style of an individual.

Like a cartoon drawn with a few sparse lines, the earliest recollections, in vignette form, depict the essential ingredients of a life style—the main guiding line for adapting to life and its demands. For Adler, the most important information in a memory was what was ***expressed,*** not what was ***repressed.*** Memory thus was highly selective and early recollections were selected from a vast number of experiences to be remembered because they contained adaptively useful information for the remembering individual.

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

For most people, the time of continuous memory begins about age seven or eight. After this point, a person can recall a stream of memories which have connections to other areas of life. These later memories are recalled in a background setting; i.e., the memory is one event in a series of events. Before this time of continuous memory, most people have a handful of early memories which stand isolated. These memories are usually very short with sparse detail. An example of each type will show the difference:

> Age 5—(The doctor came to give me a shot everyday.) One day I didn't cry. (I got to be a pro at it.) He was proud of me. I felt real good about being able to take a shot without screaming.
>
> Age 3—One day I made in my pants. I was playing in the yard. I felt ashamed.

Both these memories as well as others in this chapter are taken from a collection by Mosak et al. (1980). They were given by the same person. The second memory is sparse in detail and contains no background, unlike the first. Both memories are equally valid but in the first, the background material has been put in parentheses. Background is useful in providing context, but it is not the recollection per se.

An early recollection (ER) is a vignette. It has a definite beginning and end. It usually has a visual quality so that one can visualize it as a tableau. The content of the recollection may seem important or trivial but one may extract from it a theme which is always important to the person. Often the material offered by a subject is a report rather than a recollection. An example of such a report is

> I always used to go with my father for Sunday walks. I loved the time we had together, just he and I.

While this report also has a visual quality, it does not qualify as an early recollection. It is not the description of a specific incident and does not have the here and now narrative quality of a recollection. Reports give important information about the person but do not lend themselves to the same kind of projective assessment as do the ER. The ER about the doctor's daily visit just given shows that a memory may be part report and part ER. The report part constitutes background which makes the ER more understandable, but it is only the ER part that is subject to analysis for our particular purpose.

THE DIAGNOSTIC SIGNIFICANCE OF EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

Adler (1937, 1964b) considered the discovery of the significance of early recollections to be one of the most important findings of Individual Psychology. When understood, the memories gave glimpses of profound depths within the personality structure. Admittedly, ER are not to be considered correct records of actual facts, but alterations from facts were for Adler evidence of creative tendencies in the memories which were cognitively consistent with the subject's own life goals and own private way of assigning meaning and value to the various aspects of existence. Adler drew many inferences from ER; the subject's attitude toward life, hints about why a particular line of movement in life was chosen, indications of compensatory devices developed to cope with felt inadequacies, evidence of courage or its lack, of the preference for direct or indirect methods of coping, of the type of interpersonal transactions preferred, of the presence or absence of social interest, of the values assigned to affiliation, competence behavior, status concerns, compliance and rebellion, security issues—in short, of the stance the subject adopts in order to cope with the challenges of life.

Adler used ER in order to understand the person in the present and did this by looking at the ways the ER would fit in with and explain present behavior. He used as an example the ER of a man who remembered "I was sitting in a room playing with a toy and my mother was sitting close to me." Adler made the correlation "... the patient suffers from anxiety when alone" (1964b, p. 122). The memory taken together with the symptom suggests to Adler that the patient was pampered by his mother during childhood.

From reading Adler, one deduces that he used both a nomothetic and an idiosyncratic way of looking at ER. When Adler said that ER focus on the nurturing mother are indicators of a pampered childhood or that ER which focus on danger situations are evidence of insecurity in life, he suggested that any ER with specific content may indicate a specific correlative trait or historical experience. Such a hypothesis would be relatively easy to test. On the other hand, Adler, in his anecdotal writings, often did something else. In discussing a patient, he began with the presenting situation and then examined the patient's ER in order to find guiding lines which could then explain the patient's present situation as his/her typical way of coping with life, so that the ER and present situation are seen to contain the same idiosyncratic themes. This second hypothesis does not lend itself so easily to objective measurement and thus cannot be so easily verified.

Primed And Unprimed Memories

Study of ER as a projective device probably began in the 40s when Kadis and Lazarsfeld (1948) described the differences between the material found in ER and in "images" which subjects were asked to construct of a certain specific person at a certain age. They found that the usual method of eliciting ER often did not include information about the most significant people in the person's early life. However, when prompted to recall a memory about such a person, usually a parent or sibling, the product centered specifically upon the image of the recalled person. Although Kadis and Lazarsfeld called these "images," they are actually primed ER. Usually, the examiner asks a non-priming question such as "What are your earliest memories from childhood?" Priming consists of directing a person's recall to a specific other person or event and is more likely to give information about the other person and his/her relation to the subject than to reveal in neutral terms the most basic elements of the life style.

Kadis and Lazarsfeld offer several instructive examples. One describes a 16 year old girl who stated that her older sister, who always had been kind to her, was her ideal. When asked to give her earliest image of her sister, the subject gave a primed memory:

> I was to be a flower girl at my favorite aunt's wedding. The night before the wedding my sister chopped my hair off. I couldn't go to the wedding.

"Images" (primed ER) are offered by Kadis and Lazarsfeld, as an additional assessment tool, providing information not so readily available in many unprimed ER.

Possible Sources of Contamination in Memories

Bergson (1911) had as early as 1896 stated that "The function of the body...is to choose...the useful memory, that which may complete and illuminate the present situation with a view to ultimate action." Ansbacher (1973) claimed that Bergson thus supported Adler's view that "recollections are tendentious and biased and in the service of the purposes and goals of the individual and that one may therefore infer from a person's recollections his ideals and goals."

Bartlett's (1932) classic study on memory led him to state, "Remembering appears to be far more decisively an affair of construction rather than one of mere reproduction . . . The construction . . . (is one) . . . that would justify . . . (the subject's) . . . attitude" (pp. 205-207). Edwards (1941) compared the memories of pro-New Dealers and anti-New Dealers and found that each group tended to remember in a way that harmonized with their own political attitudes. Adler himself commented on this, saying:

> The use of memories to stabilize a mood can be plainly seen in every day life. If a man suffers a defeat and is discouraged by it, he recalls previous instances of defeat... (1958, p. 74).

This raises the question of how much in the ER is an expression of a person's current mood rather than of abiding core personality. Some studies have tested the ability of ER to conform to certain clinical diagnostic entities. One such is by Eisenstein and Ryerson (1951). They examined the earliest memory of patients with certain illnesses and found concordance between the memory and the category of illness. For example the earliest memory in a case of colitis was "I was sitting on a toilet in school, sick with a stomach ache and mother having to come and get me."

A more recent study of Fogarty and Helmsley (1983) suggested that current mood is an important determinant of the mood found in ER. They used as subjects depressed outpatients compared to a crop of normal controls. Patients with depression showed an increased number of sad memories compared to normal. Improvement in depression, as measured by the *Beck Depression Inventory* showed a decrease in the sad mood of the ER.

If we could always find such a correlation, it would be very convenient, but we must ask some hard questions. Are the ER contaminated by the fact that the patient is suffering from an acute illness? Would exactly the same memory be given if the patient were examined in a period when free of symptoms? Therapists who use ER and work with depressed patients have noted that during acute depression the ER tend to have a somber mood and that these same ER become more cheerful as the depression lifts. This is more likely to signify a change in mood state rather than in any underlying character trait, as Fogarty and Helmsley said.

Similar studies by Friedman (1952) and Hafner et al. (1979) examined and compared ER of patients who were mentally ill; a neurotic vs. a psychotic cohort and normals vs. schizophrenics. Both studies found some differences between the cohorts, but in neither case was allowance made for possible contamination by the intensity of illness. Normals are different from psychotics in many different test instruments. Hafner et al. (1979) do conclude that ER cannot be used as an objective measure of differences between normals and schizophrenics if one uses content analysis as does the Manaster-Perryman Manifest Content method of scoring ER (Manaster & Perryman, 1974).

The study of Tobin and Etigson (1968) also measures the effect of current state on ER. Their cohort consisted of subjects aged 68 to 92 with a mean age of 78. Fifty-seven subjects were in the experimental group while eighty-three were in the control group. The experimental group consisted of people who were waiting for admission to a home for the aged. The control sample consisted of people living independently in the community, others also on the waiting list or residents of the homes for the aged. Both samples were asked to give ER six months to one year apart, however, the experimental group gave ER approximately four months before admission to the home and again approximately two months after admission. The independent variable was thus admission to the home and the effect of such institutionalization on ER was the object of study. The experimental group differed from controls in giving ER with more themes of loss (death, injury, interpersonal loss, etc.). Tobin and Etigson concluded that a situation change thus affects ER and that this must be taken into account by Adlerians when they interpret ER. While many of their reported ER would be considered reports rather than true ER, enough true ER were still in their sample to sound this note of caution about the contamination of ER by intercurrent life events.

THE IDIOGRAPHIC CHARACTER OF ER

Saul et al. (1956) recommended the way Adler used ER to psychoanalysts.

> Earliest memories are absolutely specific, distinctive and characteristic for each individual; moreover, they reveal, probably more clearly than any other single psychological datum the central core of each person's psychodynamics, his chief motivations, form of neurosis and emotional problem. This is the empirical observable fact. As to explaining it, it seems that the major unconscious motivations ***select*** those memories which fit them, just as the interplay of emotional forces which generates the dream selects just those events and

> memories which fit their need for expression...Memories, like all psychic functions, exist for the service of the biological motivations of the life cycle. Early memories are retained to serve present needs. . . (p. 229)

The statement by Saul et al. should help to dispel the notion that ER are a private device to be used only by followers of Alfred Adler. . . Every school of personality that postulates the existence of an organized personality structure must logically conclude that early childhood recollections have some relationship to that structure. If recollections are persistent, stable over time and situation, then these recollections must have some powerful connection with the dynamics of the personality. Furthermore, if these recollections are not about impressive events, but seem trivial and even uninteresting, that connection must be even more powerful. For Freud, these apparently trivial memories could be understood as "screens" with the repressed material clouded over. For Adler, they were expressive and creative productions and were remembered because the subject was saying something important to self, something worth remembering, perhaps a mnemonic device for unlocking a whole series of instructions for perceiving and responding to the facts of one's existence.

Mosak (1958, 1977) provided a reasonably full description of the use of ER as a projective technique which has since been used as model for many of the subsequent descriptions in the literature (e.g., Verger & Camp, 1970; Olson, 1979; Mosak, 1965; Eckstein, 1976; Kopp & Dinkmeyer, 1975; McKelvie, 1979; and others). He pointed out that ER, like dreams and free drawings, are a completely unstructured projective technique. No external stimulus is offered to the subject, unlike the Rorschach or TAT. All memories are selected and contain omissions and distortions. Whether the ER is faithful to reality or highly distorted is not of importance for the purpose of using the technique. The ER will all be consistent with each other, but complement, supplement, and elaborate each other so that ER which seem to make contradictory statements, will, when put together, prove to be statements about the same issue. The following two ER are examples of this principle:

> age 9—We had a spelling bee. I was the last one standing. It felt great.
>
> age 7—We were at a picnic and they had races for prizes. I came in second in my heat. I was crushed. (Mosak et al., 1980)

At first glance the outcome in each recollection seems different. One is a memory of winning, the other is a memory of being second best. Put together, they both make one statement: "To be number one is the only position in life that counts. Second best is not good enough."

Mosak further described how ER are interpreted both thematically and with respect to specific details, how to use a sequential analysis of a group of ER for a more rounded and complete assessment and how to reconcile contradictions. Like Ackerknecht (1976) and Dreikurs (1954), Mosak recommended the use of a series of ER rather than a single one whose interpretation is usually much more chancy and like Dreikurs he stresses the importance of paying attention to small details that profoundly affect the meaning of ER.

Subsequent to Mosak's paper, a group of papers appeared in literature in the 60s examining the use of ERs. Langs et al. (1960) developed a manual for scoring the manifest content of ER which scored 37 different items such as the feeling tone of the memory, who is mentioned in the memory, the kind of event, whether or not body parts are mentioned, and so forth. Although these authors found differences between paranoid schizophrenics and hysterical character disorders, their study added very little to the use of ER for personality assessment except to show that a wide range of scoring possibilities existed. In a later study, Langs (1965a/1965b) used ER to predict personality correlates and was more successful. Using the first ER only, he constructed 24 categories of themes and/or content in ER such as themes of illness—damage—conflict; subject's role as a pawn of others, others as subservient to the subject; moral themes; environment as unpredictable, supportive and/or traumatic; absence of interaction between subject and others; and separation or loss. Why Langs chose just these categories is not clear; presumably he found them in his group of memories and then looked for personality correlates. For each of these categories, Langs found correlates, e.g., subjects who had ER about vehicles tended to be inhibited, to be low in hostility and introspective. Langs' method of scoring tends to make ER an objective rather than a projective test and overlooks the idiosyncratic quality of ER. No matter how many trait correlations can be discovered, this is not yet the discovery of what Adler called the unique style of life of the individual.

Hedvig (1963) studied the stability of ER during exposure to experimentally manipulated experiences. The experimental conditions were success-failure and hostility-friendliness. Hedvig found that varying the experiment condition (telling the subject that he was succeeding or failing and doing so in a hostile or friendly manner) changed the TAT stories given by the subject but not the ER. Hedvig's finding is of crucial importance when we consider the effects of situational stress on ER as reported by Tobin and Etigson (1968). These two studies are in direct opposition in their conclusions and the contradiction requires further explanation.

Categorical Ratings or Gestalt Like Wholes?

Ferguson (1964) described how after three years of trying to develop rating scales for Adlerian raters to use in the study of ER, she finally gave up because none of the judges were satisfied with the scales. However, when simply asked to interpret a group of ER, all judges were able to do so in a short paragraph. Three judges were given sets of ERs and sets of interpretations and asked to match one with the other (interjudge reliability test). Each of the three judges matched ER to summary paragraphs written by the other judges. All the matchings were better than chance.

A study which was successful in using rating categories was performed by Levy and Grigg (1962). Noting that many previous ER studies had found high agreement between ER and clinical data, they decided to see if they could use ER to predict clinical and personality data. They used only the ER and the sex of the subject as their data base. In order to organize the material in the ER they developed a system similar to Murray's approach to the TAT. They considered each ER to contain a central theme which captures an "essential emotional state of the individual" (an internal attitude). Different ER from the same person could offer different themes which reflected different configurations among the themes. They devised three qualitative scales to rate these themes: Dependency/Independency, Destructive Aggression/Constructive Aggression and Sexuality. Each of these major categories had subgroups. Their own examples illustrate their scoring system:

THEME: DEPENDENCY/INDEPENDENCE
(subcategories with examples)

1. Feelings of deep seated frustration of dependency needs—complete abandonment; sense of being lost.

   Aunt came to house. Another aunt had died two years before.

   Aunt read palms and told me I would die young.

2. Feelings of temporary abandonment; separation from parents; insufficient affection; sadness over losing a real object; dissatisfaction with one's lot; birth of a sibling.

   Crying when mother took me to the first day of school.

   My brother was born and I had to go with my grandmother and stay with her until he was born.

3. Aggressive reactions to feelings of being deprived.

   Mother went out and left me and my younger brother with a twelve year old cousin. My brother and I were playing and we set the house on fire.

4. Giving rather than receiving care.

   I wanted to go to church but stayed home to take care of Mother.

5. Gratification of dependency needs.

   I got a present of a swing with a canopy from my aunt.

(From Levy & Grigg, 1962)

While we would not use the same scoring system, nor would we interpret the ER the same way, Levy and Grigg seem to have been the first to successfully approach what Adlerian interpreters do globally by creating a system of themes and subthemes and by relating the subthemes to each other in order to find a ***configuration.*** They called their method ***thematic-configurational analysis.*** How they do it can be shown in their example of one ER.

> Age 4 (male): I was on my first pair of roller skates. Mother had been going to get them for me and she had to go to the hospital for her operation. I asked her and got the skates from her before she went. I remember riding on them in the basement. All the rest were in the basement and all were laughing and it was a happy time.

In this ER, say the authors, feelings of temporary abandonment and attempts to be independent interact with each other. The inner emotional logic of the sequence of themes seems to say, "If mother abandons me, then I must strive to be independent." This is exactly the way many Adlerians would interpret this memory. The different parts of the memory are pulled together by connecting words, "If this, then that," into a Gestalt. This is the global method of interpretations we often use. Note especially Adler's (1964a/1929) interpretation of a memory:

> I went to school when I was six years old. I was not very happy. The very first day a boy attacked me. I was dreadfully afraid and trembled but...I sprang at him and threw him down. (p. 8)

Adler interpreted, "This little fragment of memory records the two typical motives of the man's life style. He trembles at first but only to overcome. And that little word 'but' holds the rich meaning of his compensation for feelings of inferiority" (1964a, p. 8).

Can a similar scoring help us to interpret ER? Levy and Grigg admit their system is not yet adequate. It simply serves to identify certain themes, not to interpret them. They find they still have to pay attention to omitted themes or persons and still have to decide whether a memory, about say the father, is to be interpreted to apply specifically to the father alone, or is a prototype (Mosak, 1958) for all father figures, authority figures, or even all males. Their scoring system does not do this for them. Furthermore, they had difficulty interpreting memories with sparse details because they could not score them. Here Adlerians with a global approach or similar method could do better. Nevertheless, this is a start at a scoring system.

Olson (1979) stated that the development of scales such as those of Levy and Grigg or Manaster and Perryman should lead to the discovery of basic nomothetic data which would enhance the value of the idiographic interpretation used by the clinician. Some of these scales will be examined in a later chapter.

Friedman and Schiffman (1962) performed a study which showed that raters could examine ER and conclude from them whether a person was a paranoid schizophrenic or a psychotic depressive. The sample contained only depressives and schizophrenics. Would these same raters have been able to distinguish those ER from those of a normal control group? Probably not. Ferguson's (1964) study and another by Hedvig (1965) showed that Adlerian and non-Adlerian judges were not able to consistently match ER with clinical diagnostic categories.

This is contrary to the claim of Eisenstein and Ryerson (1951). At this time no good evidence exists to support the concept that one can predict clinical states from ER. The usual methods of interpretation used by Adlerians are designed to assess core personality dynamics, not clinical states. They have developed no standards for trying to diagnose such clinical states from ER and to even expect to do so would run counter to Adler's theory. Knowing the life style does not mean knowing the clinical diagnosis. Other elements may be present in the ER which can lead to a diagnosis as Eisenstein and Ryerson suggested. Adler (1969a/1929) pointed out that physicians frequently have ER of sickness and death, but here he is speaking about the ***content*** of the memories, not a guiding line for coping with the world. Possibly in the future a set of templates will be developed which will allow effective correlation between certain items in ER and clinical state. One recent example is the finding by Peven and Shulman (1983) that the ER of manic-depressives show a tendency to heighten affect; that is to invest the story in the ER with extreme emotion. Another study by Jackson and Sechrest (1962) found that anxiety neurotics showed more fear, depressives showed more abandonment, and gastrointestinal patients showed more themes of gastrointestinal distress than other patients. Unfortunately, these themes did not occur often enough to be useful in diagnosis.

Taylor's (1975) review of validation studies essentially concluded that ER are a useful and rapid method of personality appraisal which correlates well with other assessment tools, but not a tool at this time to diagnose clinical psychopathology.

Mosak (1958, 1969) reminded us that ER can be studied, as Langs (1965a, 1965b) did, from a psychoanalytic point of view, to discover in them id, ego, and superego functioning; drive precipitates; and defensive operations. As Mosak pointed out, this is not the same as eliciting from them an understanding of life style—how an individual human entity creatively fashions its own subjective reality and responds to it. In later chapters we will discuss how we can interpret the ER of an individual in such a way that we can elicit the life style.

CHAPTER 4

HOW DATA ARE COLLECTED

The ***Life Style Inventory*** (LSI) form provided in this Chapter is a skeletal guide to the material to be collected for the life style formulation. The page design grew out of long experience with the approximate amount of information elicited and requiring recording. Other designs might be even more useful, especially if the data were to be used for research. The form has appropriate places for recording information about family constellation and early recollections.

FAMILY CONSTELLATIONS (FC)

The family constellation is actually a form of life history study and a form of personality inventory. As a life history study, it is limited in two ways. The material is all autobiographical and therefore entirely subjective, with all the limitations of any subjective report. In addition, it is limited to early life history and thus is not designed to elicit the effects of significant incidents that occurred in adolescence and later, important as they may be. For life style assessment, the early experiences through puberty are the most important. Limiting the information to early life can have varied effects. Occasionally a subject who recalls childhood as exceedingly unhappy will be unwilling to give the material because doing so is accompanied by painful emotions. Other subjects may find it easier to speak of childhood because the temporal distance reduces the remembered pain. Some find it easier to admit embarrassing behavior in the past than in the present. However, if the subject offers the opinion that later life experiences were influential, our custom is to accept this information also and assess the role of these later experiences as well. In Adlerian theory, however, the basic aspects of the life style are supposedly formed by the age of five or six and thus the early life material is given much more weight.

The family constellation portion of the LSI is a personality inventory to the extent that it contains trait ratings. One difference from usual personality inventories is that a subject rates the siblings as well as oneself and thus the trait ratings are comparative rather than absolute. In effect, all family members are assigned trait ratings and all these ratings are assessed as part of the setting in which these behaviors were displayed—the situational stimulus and personal response are assessed as an interaction.

The material used in assessing family constellation (FC) consists of answers to questions asked by the assessor. While conceivably these questions could be self-administered, it is standard for an assessor to ask them and to pursue, with more specific questions, items or areas that are incompletely covered or ambiguous or need elaboration. In order for the procedure to be more suitable for self-administration, the form would require many more specific questions.

While trait ratings may lend themselves to psychometric analysis, the FC is not really an objective measurement of traits, although some attempts have been made to apply objective analysis of the person according to the trait ratings (O'Phelan, 1977). The FC is not useful for measuring current states, since it assesses traits, not states. The trait assessments are actually part of a larger analysis of the interpersonal field in the family—both role analysis (Sarbin & Allen, 1968) and group process analysis. As mentioned in Chapter 2, role analysis includes role location, expectations, demands, enactment, skills, and self-role congruence. In addition, some roles have more power than others and different roles lead to different interactions. Group process analysis examines how the family members communicate, how conflict occurs and is resolved, how people cooperate and compete, how dominance hierarchies are established, and how available roles are divided.

Early recollections (ER) are essentially a projective technique (Mosak, 1958). Sundberg (1977) asserted that Freudian theory was the driving force behind the use of projective techniques. In classical psychoanalytic theory, the important constituents of personality include unconscious id drives and ego defenses. Projective techniques are intended to elicit such unconscious psychic material. For Adlerians, projective techniques reveal the consistencies of personality—thus the life style, which is the most consistent personality aspect of all. As discussed in Chapter 3, ER are more consistent than either Rorschach or TAT over time and are less influenced by the current state of the subject than those two tests.

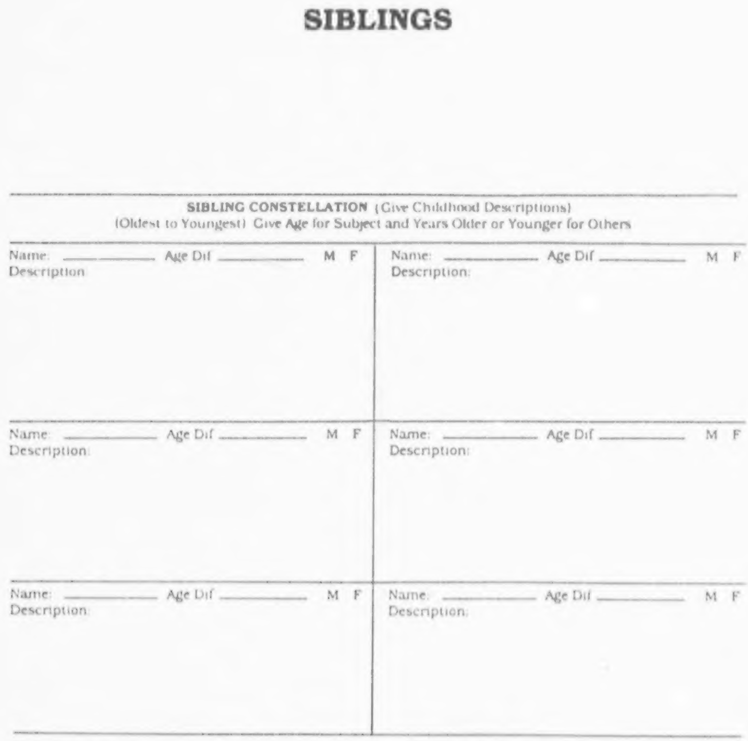
According to Lindzey (1961), ER are a ***construction*** technique—that is, the subject is required to produce something, in this case, early memories. Because one early memory often stimulates another, ER also have some aspects of an association technique.

Collecting information about the family constellation uses a ***structured interview*** technique. The assessor asks a series of questions in a specified order so that the data collection process remains fairly uniform from one person to another and across all settings. Some parts of this structured interview also can be considered to contain projective material. Any open-ended question such as, "What were you like as a child?" invites the subject to select his/her own preferred parameters for describing oneself. We will discuss the value of this later in the chapter.

The structured interview begins with putting the siblings in their chronological order and obtaining a short, spontaneous description of each. Then, the siblings are grouped and special circumstances which may influence family roles are investigated. Siblings are then rated against each other. Areas of physical, social, and sexual development, and school performance are then examined to see how the subject functioned in extra-familial areas. Some questions are asked about common existential issues or identity concerns; such as, what were the childhood ambitions or ideals?

Next we turn our attention to the parents, the behavior they modeled, child-parent relations, parent-parent relations, their values and the atmosphere in the home. Sometimes, grandparents and other adults play important roles as models and caretakers. That part of the structured interview dealing with the family constellation ends with questions about such adults.

The rest of the life style assessment data consists of the ER. We describe our method for collecting ER.



SIBLINGS

SIBLING CONSTELLATION (Give Childhood Descriptions)
(Oldest to Youngest) Give Age for Subject and Years Older or Younger for Others

Name: ________ Age Dif ________ M F Description	Name: ________ Age Dif ________ M F Description:
Name: ________ Age Dif ________ M F Description:	Name: ________ Age Dif ________ M F Description:
Name: ________ Age Dif ________ M F Description:	Name: ________ Age Dif ________ M F Description:

Figure 4.1. Sibling Constellation, page 2 of the LSI Form.

Page 2 of the form (Figure 4.1) gives us information about such variables as family size, age distribution, and sexual distribution, which all may influence family climate, sibling roles, group process, and personality outcome. In the following sequence of numbering, the first number refers to the page number of the Life Style Inventory form, while the second number suggests an orderly system for proceeding to gather the information. (Thus, number 2-4 suggests the 4th step to be taken in filling out page 2.)

SIBLING CONSTELLATION

Siblings: Basic Information
(Top Part of Page 2 of the LSI Form)

2-1 In the spaces provided, list the names of all siblings in descending order of age. Include subject in order of age. Circle M or F for sex of sibling.

If there are more than six siblings, use another sheet. This permits the interviewer at a glance to observe family size, the sexual distribution, age differentials and some minor factors such as whether nicknames are used.

2-2 Include all children, living or deceased.

Note all miscarriages. Include any children who have died. This gives a truer picture of family size and may explain large gaps in age between successive children. If a child has died in childhood, it may affect the psychological position of the other siblings within the family and also may affect the parental treatment of the other children. In a two-child family, the death of a sibling may lead to special treatment of the survivor; birth order position may change or the survivor may find it necessary to compete with a dead sibling. A child born after the death of a sibling may be treated as a family treasure, pampered and overprotected. The deceased child may become an ideal model who retains a special place in the hearts of the parents and to which standard the surviving children may never attain. Furthermore, the death of a child may strongly affect the family climate. In some such families, the deceased still inhabits an important psychological position in the FC.

2-3 Place an asterisk after the name of the respondent.

The asterisk reminds us that the information given represents the ***respondent's*** view of himself and his family, not necessarily the way things actually were. If we were to interview other members of the family, we would discover that they might have different views of themselves, the others, and events. It is not uncommon when gathering such data from siblings for the interviewer to wonder whether they were truly raised in the same family.

2-4 Place the respondent's current age next to his/her name. Then list the age discrepancy, plus or minus, next to each sibling's name.

Example of an entry for Bessie

Charles +6	Matilda (+4) Died when Bessie age 5	Merton +2	Bessie* 27

Perusing this age distribution presents us with clues to subgroupings within the siblings constellation. If we cannot easily ascertain the compositions of the sub-groups from the age and sex distributions, items 2-5, 2-6 and 2-7 may provide additional information.

The age discrepancies also assist in the evaluation of the degree of competition between siblings. Siblings closer in age tend to compete more.

2-5 For siblings who are deceased, place parentheses about the age discrepancy.

Next to the parentheses, make a statement such as:

> "Died before Bessie* born." "Died when Bessie* was adult," etc.

In the space for sibling description, under each space, record a description of the dead sibling, but also note the circumstances surrounding the death, the family's reaction to it, and any changes in the subject's position. We already noted in 2-2 the importance of this information.

2-6 Starting with the oldest child, inquire, "What was he (or she) like as a child?"

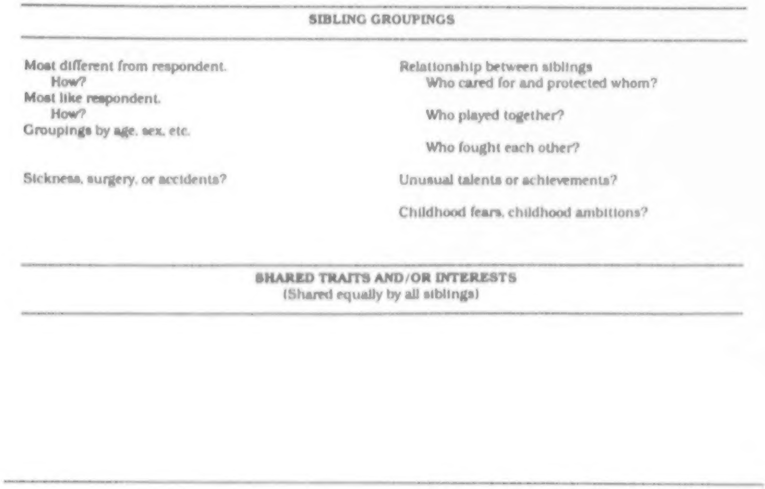
Obtain the spontaneous descriptions for each child in turn, including the subject.

2-7 Inquire of the subject, "What were you like as a child?"

When we collect this spontaneous information, we avoid influencing the direction of the respondent's communication. We also learn, from what the person chooses to emphasize, what was important about each sibling or the nature of the individual and family values. Do not interfere with the spontaneous description. However, if the spontaneous description is too sparse, one may prompt by general suggestions such as, "What stands out in your mind about him/her?"

The subject can be expected to describe the childhood characteristics of self and siblings along those dimensions that are important to the subject. This aspect of the inventory can be compared to Kelly's (1955) Role Repertory Construct Test. Kelly had the subject choose three people and then describe in what way two were similar and the third differed from the other two. The subject's own choice of qualities by which to assess differences and similarities revealed the dimensions by which the subject construed people—that is, the subject's personal constructs. Here, too, the subject reveals important dimensions by which he/she assesses self and others, as well as the assessment constructs used in the family (family values).

If the subject begins the answer to 2-7 by stating, "I was fat," the assessor should then ask, "What effect did it have on you?" Thus the first construct dimensions emphasized by the subject always provide the opportunity to explore further.



SIBLING GROUPINGS

Most different from respondent.
How?
Most like respondent.
How?
Groupings by age, sex, etc.

Sickness, surgery, or accidents?

Relationship between siblings
Who cared for and protected whom?

Who played together?

Who fought each other?

Unusual talents or achievements?

Childhood fears, childhood ambitions?

SHARED TRAITS AND/OR INTERESTS
(Shared equally by all siblings)

Figure 4.2. Sibling Groupings, page 2 of the LSI Form.

SIBLING GROUPINGS

(Second Part of Page 2 of the LSI Form)

2-8 "Who was most different from you?"

Dreikurs (1953) held that a child is most unlike its most significant competitor in his/her way of striving for significance. If the subject's reply indicates a sibling who is not in the same sub-group, inquire as to who was the most different in the sub-group. Dreikurs' opinion also was that this competition influenced the child's search for place more than parental influence. Sometimes the child designated as most different is a child different from all the siblings, e.g., a retarded child. In that case, ask "Who was next most different?" The answer to these questions can be checked in the section on trait ratings, when similarities and differences become apparent.

2-9 "In what ways?"

While this question elaborates upon the previous question, it also expands upon the information given spontaneously on the first page. This added structure may assist inarticulate subjects to furnish information concerning the sibling configuration even when they have previously expressed inability to do so. A subject who has focused only upon similarities may here be encouraged to provide differences.

2-10 "Who was most like you?"

The reply to this question provides the clue to modeling, alliances, and family values. In this instance we permit comparison with siblings outside of the subject's group, since a young child may model self after an older sibling outside of the sub-group.

2-11 "In what ways?"

> **Example:** "Who was most like you?"
>
> "Charles was most like me. We both tried to please Mother. We would help around the house. We were both more responsible."

This answer suggests that pleasing by being helpful was a family value, that Charles and Bessie were perhaps allied and perhaps imitating one of the parents.

2-12 "Were the children grouped according to age, sex, or in any other way?"

In some families, the family consists of "older" children and "younger" children. In others the distinction is the "boys" and the "girls." Some families may be divided into the foreign-born and the native-born. Another grouping may be in terms of the children who resemble the father's family and those who resemble the mother's. Birth order only accounts for a small number of psychological positions within the family, as discussed in Chapter 2. In a family of five children, an important procedure is to determine sub-groups in order to understand the psychological position of the three middle siblings. A five-sibling family might be grouped as a 1-2-2 sibship, with the oldest actually functioning as an only child. Another possibility is a 2-3 division, with the older two forming a pair (first born and second) and the last three forming a first, middle, and youngest.

2-13 "Who cared for and protected whom?"

Because many subjects experience difficulty in dividing their families into sub-groups, questions 2-13, 2-14, and 2-15 are designed to assist in determining such groupings. The answer to the question, "Who cared for and protected whom?" may assist us in subgrouping. It also may expose whether any of the children were in a parental role. We also may learn whether nurturance and responsibility were valued in this family.

2-14 "Who played together?"

Children generally engage in peer play with members of their own sub-group. Occasionally a younger child will describe play with a very much older sibling. This is generally not peer play, but adult-child play.

2-15 "Who fought each other?"

As with Item 2-14, children generally fight, whatever form the fighting may take, with siblings within the same sub-group.

2-16 "Were any of the siblings sick? Did they have surgery or were they in an accident?"

For life style purposes, we are only interested in such events which occurred during early childhood; e.g., through the elementary school period. The inquiry also should include how the sibling or the respondent was treated by virtue of this particular event and how the respondent felt about it. Many children achieve a special place or receive special treatment by virtue of being ill, handicapped, or the victim of an accident. Some children are relieved of responsibility or given extra attention, comfort, or sympathy. Some children, learning that they can obtain special place or special treatment this way, manipulate the other family members to get this special treatment. Later in life they may expect teachers and schoolmates to continue the special treatment. One can usually assume that when the subject replies to this question, "I nearly died," that special treatment was received and that the event carries special significance.

We can learn whether any additional effects occurred from the event. An example of such additional effects can be seen in Adler's claim that physicians have recollections of illness, accident, or death (Adler, 1968). Adler's own recollections contain such events, influencing him to become a physician (Mosak & Kopp, 1973). Additional information on illness can be recorded in the section on Childhood Physical Development Item 4-1 in this manual, and top part of page 4 of the LSI form).

2-17 "Did any of the siblings possess an unusual talent or did any achieve anything special or noteworthy?"

In the search for significance in which children engage within the family structure, many children find their position within the family because they have some unusual talent or ability, positive or negative. Precociousness; being in trouble; academic, athletic, or artistic accomplishment; winning a competition; and unusual behavior all afford the child a feeling of significance. The talent is not the important determinant but rather the reinforcement received.

2-18 "What fears did you have as a child?"

The reply to this question will furnish additional information concerning the development of the child. However, subjects also may tell us a particular fear which they had as a child is retained in adult life. This information assumes special importance if we plan to engage the subject in therapy. The childhood fear is not considered the cause of the adult fear. A historical continuity may exist between childhood and adult fear, but the adult fear has a contemporaneous purpose. The childhood fear itself is of less significance than the payoff the child may have received for being afraid (Mosak et al., 1980). For example, fear of sleeping in the dark may permit the child to sleep with the parents, keeping them tied to him/her.

Some subjects will not reveal a single fear, but will describe themselves as "always fearful" or "afraid of everything, including my own shadow." Elaboration upon this theme will throw light upon their self-training in the fear response.

2-19 "What was your childhood ambition?"

The reply, "I had different ambitions at different times in my childhood," is not uncommon. While the responses may shed light upon many aspects of child development, we would have more interest in the child's goals, as reflected in recollected ambitions. A child accustomed to receiving attention may describe the childhood ambition as being an actor or fashion model. Another child may describe a childhood ambition of being a major-league pitcher because "he's in on every play." A third child relates she loved theater, and her favorite activity was being in the school and community theatre plays.

Several forms of response reveal the child's response to adult standards or expectations. The following are examples:

> "My parents always wanted me to be a doctor. They never said so, but I knew what they expected."
>
> "The nuns told me I should be a priest. I tried to be scrupulous and was always running to confession."
>
> "Anything my parents expected me to do, I did the opposite."

Other responses may give us a measure of the child's level of aspiration or self-training in certain areas.

SHARED TRAITS AND/OR INTERESTS

(Bottom Part of Page 2 of the LSI Form)

2-20 "Were any traits shared by the siblings?"

This question often elicits family values, interests, and/or behaviors. Traits or interests shared equally by all the siblings are considered to be family traits or interests, showing family values or behaviors. For example, all members in a family may have a bad temper and both parents may have modeled such behavior for the children. (See Figure 4.2.)

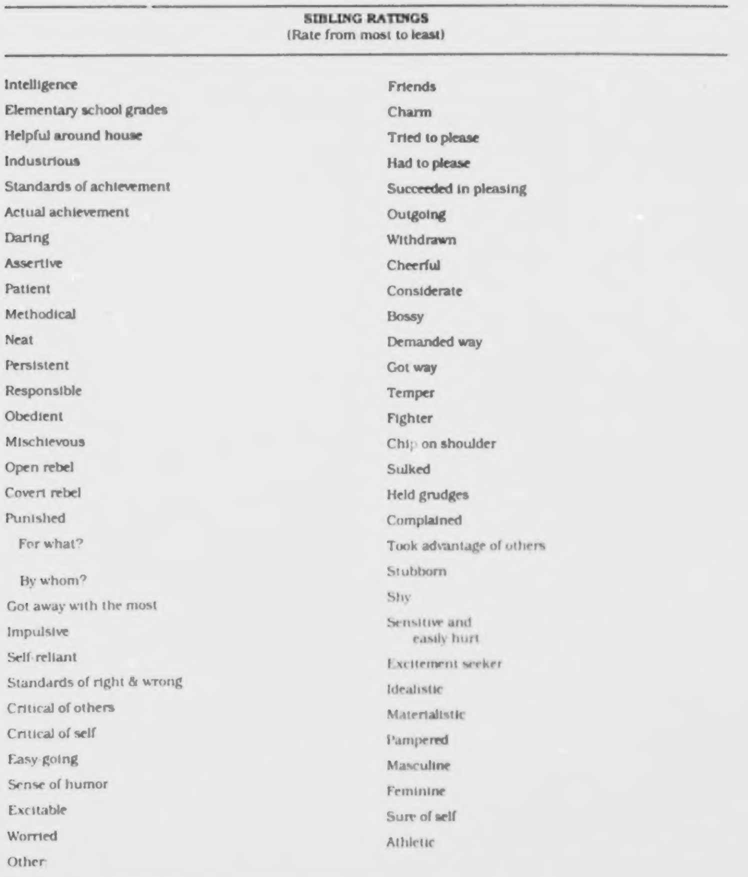
SIBLING RATINGS

(Page 3 of the LSI Form)

Specific Comparison Ratings of Siblings

Rating siblings comparatively on specific traits has several advantages—some subjects who have difficulty giving spontaneous descriptions are much more able to describe specific differences between themselves and other siblings when prompted with specific questions. Furthermore, sub-groupings will become even more clear if one remembers that competition is supposedly more keen between siblings in the same subgroup. When the description of the parents is taken later, it also will become clear how this modeling influenced trait selection by the various children. The comparative ratings also reveal those areas in which each child found effective ways of coping and those areas in which each became discouraged and gave up. These areas of "success" and "failure" become crucial as the child grows older, in establishing areas of interest, competency, and levels of aspiration. The child who is a poor student early may easily become discouraged in school and lose interest in becoming academically proficient. Early success in interpersonal relationships (e.g., pleasing others) reinforces interest and practice in such behavior.

The specific ratings (Figure 4.3) have been chosen because they seem to provide us with that information we find most desirable. They do not, however, constitute an absolute or exhaustive list. A much longer list would be possible, but it would make the assessment process too long. Other traits can be used for comparison rather than these, and as we describe the assessment process in subsequent chapters, we shall find occasion to demonstrate their use. In some cases, traits on the list may be omitted because they do not add appreciably to our picture of the personality (e.g., if siblings did not attend school, then asking who got the best grades is inappropriate). In some families an appropriate procedure is to ask who was the most religious, most musical, the best dresser, the most successful with the opposite sex (although this question takes us into adolescence), the most successful in scrounging for items needed by the family, the most interested in helping, and so forth.



SIBLING RATINGS
(Rate from most to least)

Intelligence
Elementary school grades
Helpful around house
Industrious
Standards of achievement
Actual achievement
Daring
Assertive
Patient
Methodical
Neat
Persistent
Responsible
Obedient
Mischievous
Open rebel
Covert rebel
Punished
  For what?
  By whom?
Got away with the most
Impulsive
Self-reliant
Standards of right & wrong
Critical of others
Critical of self
Easy-going
Sense of humor
Excitable
Worried
Other:

Friends
Charm
Tried to please
Had to please
Succeeded in pleasing
Outgoing
Withdrawn
Cheerful
Considerate
Bossy
Demanded way
Got way
Temper
Fighter
Chip on shoulder
Sulked
Held grudges
Complained
Took advantage of others
Stubborn
Shy
Sensitive and easily hurt
Excitement seeker
Idealistic
Materialistic
Pampered
Masculine
Feminine
Sure of self
Athletic

Figure 4.3. Sibling Ratings, page 3 of the LSI Form.

All these questions are specific and require specific answers. This can allow respondents to be somewhat more objective than when they were providing a spontaneous description of themselves and their siblings and sometimes casts doubts on the validity of the spontaneous description by contradicting it. Subjects who tend to guard themselves for fear they will give self-derogatory information may do so less here because the average subject does not know the actual significance of most of the traits.

If Adlerians are correct in assuming the unity of personality, we should expect the subject's personality traits to cluster in such a way that consistent personality styles become apparent. Thus, the sibling who was most demanding could hardly be the one who was the most considerate and the one who was most obedient could hardly have been the most openly rebellious. Such inconsistencies beg further questioning to resolve the contradictions. As the questions are asked, they will permit the traits to cluster so that internal inconsistencies stand out.

Ratings can be asked for in two ways. With a more sophisticated subject, the request may be as follows:

3-1 "For each of the following traits, please rate your siblings and yourself from most to least."

In instances where the person has difficulty with the above instructions, the questions may be asked: "*Who was the most intelligent? Who was the least? Where would you put the others in this order?*"

Especially in larger families, the person may not be able to rank every sibling. If one cannot, the most important ranking to get is who was ***most,*** who was ***least,*** and if the subject is neither, his/her relative position in the ranking: i.e., closer to the most, next to the least.

For the neophyte life style assessor, a helpful procedure is to collect ratings for all of the siblings. Where the family is extremely large and one must economize on time, more experienced assessors may ask the subject to rate only those siblings in one's subgroup. However, remember that such shortcuts contaminate the data to some extent.

Abbreviations Used
(Top Three-Fourths of Page 12 of the LSI Form)

The requirements of recording data in a small space lead assessors to develop abbreviations. On page 12 of the LSI are the ones we use (Figure 4.4).

SIBLING RATING ABBREVIATIONS

R.M.T.W	Initials of first name of siblings listed from most to least on a given trait.
R.M = T.W	Two siblings are rated as equal on a trait
O	No sibling with a given trait **OR** not evaluated
DR	Don't remember
?	Can't rate
R..W or R.M..	Only rated some of the siblings. Dots represent omissions
H.M.L	Rating abbreviations for High, Medium, Low
M+	Rating abbreviation for High average
ML	Rating abbreviation for Medium to Low

OTHER ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

K	Know
DK	Don't know
DR	Don't remember
Fa, Mo	Father, Mother
GF, PGF, MGM	Grandfather, paternal grandfather, maternal grandmother
↑ ↓	up, increase, down, decrease
⟶	toward, leads to
⟵	away from
⟷	between, ambivalent
< >	separated
> <	together
=	equal to, identical with
>	more than
<	less than
♂ ♀	male, female
∴	therefore
∵	because
∧	over
∨	under
c̄	with
s̄	without
ā	before
p̄	after
L	like
⊘	none, nothing

Figure 4.4. Abbreviations used in LSI recordings, page 12 of the LSI Form.

1. When siblings are rated most to least, they can be recorded in order, using the first initial of each sibling, with commas between the initials. Thus, the recording R, M, T, W states that R was the most and W the least of whichever trait is being rated. Where siblings name begin with the same letter we record as M,Ja,G,Jo.

2. When two siblings are rated as equal, an equals sign shows this equality. Thus, R, M=T, W shows that M and T were equal in their display of the trait and both between the extremes of R and W.

3. When the subject feels that the trait describes none of the siblings, place a zero after the rating. Thus Withdrawn 0
4. Other designations such as "Doesn't remember" (DR) or "Can't rate" (?) may also be inserted.
5. If the subject can only rate some of the siblings or perhaps only "Most" or "Least," place dots between the ratings to indicate omissions, such as

   R . . . . W or R, M . . . .
6. Comments made by the subject in conjunction with the ratings are recorded so that we can have the precise nuance the subject wishes to communicate: e.g., Temper-J ("hair-trigger"), E ("slow to anger, but when he blew, he blew") . . . .
7. When we interview persons who are an only child in the family, we ask them to rate themselves "High" (above average) (H), "Medium" (average) (M), or "Low" (below average) (L). Should they inquire what the meanings of these ratings are, since we are interested in subjective impressions, we ask them to rate in terms of their appraisal of the meaning of these measurements. Some clients, given this task, will refine these measures, rating themselves as "High average" (M+) or "Medium to Low" (ML). Such ratings are not only permissible, but valuable.

Unless some child outside the family actually played some aspect of the sibling role, we do not ask the only child to compare self to friends, cousins, etc. We merely ask for the self rating.

	Charles	Matilda	Morton	Bessie	Robert
Intelligent	M	0	—	+	L
Grades	+	0	—	M	L
Helpful around house	—	0	M	M	L

M = most

L = least

0 = not evaluated

+ closer to M in degree the trait is expressed

— closer to L in degree the trait is expressed

Figure 4.5. An alternate procedure to record the rating data and a list of abbreviations used.

Alternate Recording Procedure

In Figure 4.5 is a relatively quick way of determining the comparative clustering of the traits among the siblings. Often this procedure is useful as an alternative way of plotting and recording the sibling ratings.

Skewed Ratings

Skewed ratings point to underlying personality traits in the respondent. Some subjects, for example, will only describe or rate siblings according to their positive qualities, as if they are following a dictum, "If you can't say something good about a person, say nothing at all." Others overemphasize the importance of being accurate and thus give no ratings or overqualify the ones they give. Some efface themselves ("I'm just average"). Still others bend over backwards to be fair, trying to insure that they will demean no one.

TRAITS

Why These Ratings/Traits

These ratings were chosen by us as a result of our own experiences with collecting life style data. Perusal of the ratings will show that most of these traits, if not all, can be expected to elicit responses from parents, siblings, and other humans in the immediate neighborhood. They are all actually facets of interpersonal interaction.

The traits can be divided into constitutional and reactive traits. "Looks" (physical appearance) contains constitutional traits. How tall and strong a boy is and how pretty a girl is may become significant issues in personality development. Intelligence, athletic ability, and sound health are all constitutionally influenced traits. They are the "givens" which the child finds within self and to which the environment responds.

Reactive traits are the larger and more important group. They reveal the interests and preferences of the child, the direction of movement for finding one's own niche in the ecological structure of the family.

Some have misunderstood Adler, claiming that the use of a trait is more important than its possession. The intelligent child may play stupid and the frail child may play frightened. Adler did not discount the role of constitution; rather, he pointed out that a constitutional given may elicit different individual responses.

In our questions, we often may use possession language (i.e., Who had a temper?) but in our thinking we automatically translate this into the language of use or movement (What was gained by using temper?).

USE OF TRAITS TO COPE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

(Pages 4 and 5 of the LSI Form)

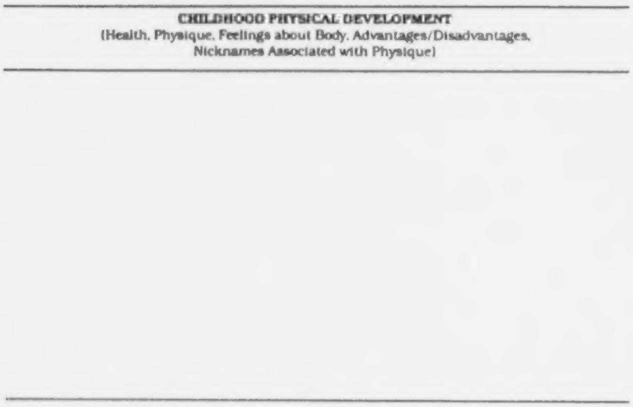
Pages 4 and 5 of the LSI form provide space for obtaining additional information concerning childhood development and experience. Physical development is recorded in the first box while Adler's three life tasks are recorded in the subsequent boxes. The final box on page 4 contains responses to questions related to the fifth life task (Mosak & Dreikurs, 1967). While we are primarily interested in the subject's development, we may seek information on all of the siblings. Much of the information already will have been elicited on pages 2 and 3.

CHILDHOOD PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT (4-1)

(Top One-Third of Page 4 of the LSI Form)

While a list of all the questions which could be asked cannot be reproduced, nor can all the kinds of information which subjects volunteer be imagined, one of the major areas explored is body image and the response of the environment to physical development, organ inferiority, and handicaps (Figure 4.6). Specific questions about sexual characteristics are asked in the section on sexual development. Typical questions on physical development include the following:

"Were you or a sibling tall, short, skinny, fat?"



CHILDHOOD PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
(Health, Physique, Feelings about Body, Advantages/Disadvantages,
Nicknames Associated with Physique)

Figure 4.6. Childhood Physical Development, page 4 of the LSI Form.

"What effect did it have on your development?"

"Were you called any nicknames because of your physique?"

"Was physical development accelerated or retarded?"

"Were there any advantages ("I always got the cream because I was so skinny") or disadvantages ("I was such a peewee the bigger kids wouldn't let me play baseball with them.")"

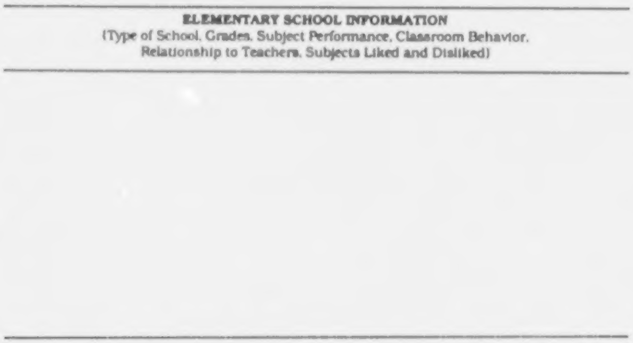
"How did you regard yourself?" ("My nose was so long, I felt ugly.")

"How did others respond to your physical development?"

The value of this section is that it gives us some idea of the influence of physique and body image on the subject's personality and how it affected standing in the family constellation. In the case of any handicap we ask how the subject compensated or overcompensated for it and in what areas he/she was discouraged by it.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INFORMATION (4-2)

(Middle One-Third of Page 4 of the LSI Form)



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INFORMATION
(Type of School, Grades, Subject Performance, Classroom Behavior,
Relationship to Teachers, Subjects Liked and Disliked)

Figure 4.7. Elementary School Information, page 4 of the LSI Form.

The information solicited in the Elementary School Information box on page 4 (Figure 4.7) usually refers to grade school only. After the subject is afforded an opportunity to comment spontaneously, we ask questions about type of school, academic achievement, attitudes toward school, and special positions in school. Typical questions include the following:

> "What type of school (public, private, parochial) did you attend?"
>
> "What was the school climate like? Strict? Permissive? Laissez-faire? Traditional?"
>
> "What were your favorite subjects?"
>
> "What subjects did you dislike?"
>
> "In what subjects did you do best? Poorest?"
>
> "What subjects did you like best? Worst?"
>
> "How did each sibling like school?"

"How did you like the teachers?"

"How did the teachers like you?"

"What was your attendance record like?"

"Did you have a special position in school, e.g., patrol, teacher's pet, cleaning erasers?"

"Were you given any special treatment, e.g., special education, classes for gifted, speech therapy, tutoring?"

School, itself, is a challenge to the young child. It requires performance and compliance and is one source of inferiority feelings in the child who does not meet school standards. The answers to the questions give us information about the child's ability to cooperate and meet standards set by others, to develop the trait of industry, and to learn skills.

Dreikurs used to teach that the child's responses to the various challenges in school provided valuable information about personality style. How the child performed in certain subjects suggested certain traits (Mosak, Schneider, & Mosak, 1980). For example, the child whose worst subject was arithmetic and best subject was English or social studies, was often a child who lacked confidence and did not like to be pinned down. Arithmetic is a subject in which answers are either right or wrong; there is no leeway for ambiguous answers. English and social studies allow a certain flexibility in answering, so that one can be partially right. Arithmetic requires care in answering questions, an application to the task. One cannot look for answers the teacher will like, there is only one right answer.

Spelling, on the other hand, is a discipline with arbitrary rules. One must learn by memory and practice how to spell correctly. Poor spellers are supposed to have a tendency to make their own rules, rather than follow established rules. On the other hand, good spelling but poor handwriting suggests an undercover rebellion against conformity.

Compliant behavior in school suggests a desire to please by conforming. Disobedience suggests rebelliousness and school underachievement suggests discouragement about performing well in school or a bid for attention.

All these statements about a subject's specific school performance should be considered only as possibilities. Other factors can be involved. Poor spelling and reading difficuty may be the result of dyslexia or underachievement, or misbehavior may reflect problems at home. Some students will work hard when they are interested in a subject and neglect subjects they do not like. Some students will work if they like the teacher; others will work only if they smell success and give up if they do not feel they will excel.

In each case, these specific behaviors can be explored further by questions such as:

Why did you do well/poorly in that subject?

How did you react when teachers liked/disliked you?

How much did you care about school? Why?

CHILDHOOD MEANINGS GIVEN TO LIFE (4-3)

(Bottom One-Third of Page 4 of the LSI Form)

Some of the guiding ideals of the subject can be elicited by questions in this area (Figure 4.8). The answers may show whether a sense of ethics was or was not a part of the early learning. Sometimes a deep sense of pessimism or chaos can be found in these answers. The ability to come to terms with the actual conditions of existence requires flexibility, creativity, and a reasonably accurate assessment of life's possibilities. Exaggerated and rigid ideals, social isolation, and pessimistic or grandiose expectations all interfere with successful adaptation.

Some of the questions that are often asked are as follows:

"What were your expectations for yourself?"

"How would you characterize your childhood outlook on life?"

"Did you have a compelling goal in life?"

"What did you feel about right and wrong?"

"How did you feel about your religion? Your family's view of or observance of religion? Of God?"

"Did you have a favorite daydream?"

"What seemed to make life worthwhile during childhood?"

CHILDHOOD MEANINGS GIVEN TO LIFE
(Expectations, Ideals, Meaningful Goals, Favorite Daydreams, Religious Convictions)

Figure 4.8. Childhood Meaning Given to Life, page 4 of the LSI Form.

CHILDHOOD GENDER AND SEXUAL INFORMATION (5-1)

(Top One-Half of Page 5 of the LSI Form)

Inquiry centers about sexual definitions, gender identification, sex role, sex play, and the developmental aspects of sex. Typical questions might include the following and the answers recorded in the top one-half of LSI, page 5 (Figure 4.9):

CHILDHOOD GENDER AND SEXUAL INFORMATION
(Development, Source of Information, Sex Play, Reaction to Pubertal Changes, Comfort with Gender, Feelings About Sexual Activity, Sexual Abuse)

Figure 4.9. Childhood Gender and Sexual Information, page 5 of the LSI Form.

"Where and how did you obtain your sex information?"

"Did you engage in sex play?" "What kind?"

"Were you caught at it?"

"Were you a tomboy?" "A sissy?"

"Did you ever want to be a member of the other sex?"

"What were boys/girls supposed to be (do, live up to) in your family?"

"How did you feel about the size of your penis/breasts?"

"When did you begin to menstruate?" "Were you informed about it?" "How was it referred to?"

"How did you feel about it?"

"When did your body begin to develop?" "How did you feel about it?" "How did you feel about your first bra?"

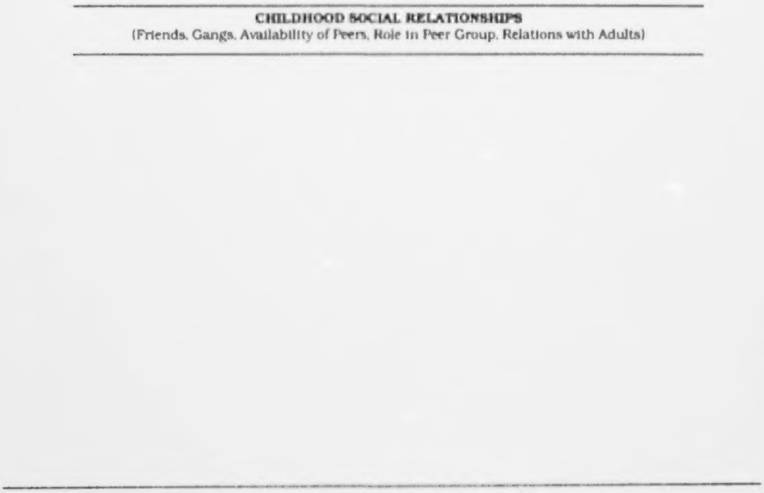
"Did you masturbate?" "When did you begin?" "How did you learn about it?" "How did you feel about it?"

"How was the topic of sex treated in your family?"

"Was anyone in your family sexually abused?"

CHILDHOOD SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS (5-2)
(Bottom One-Half of Page 5 of the LSI Form)

Again, after the subject's spontaneous observations, we inquire about such areas as social role, social affiliation, leadership-followership, and peer relationships. Such inquiry might include the following questions with responses recorded on the bottom one-half of page 5 (Figure 4.10):



CHILDHOOD SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS
(Friends, Gangs, Availability of Peers, Role in Peer Group, Relations with Adults)

Figure 4.10. Childhood Social Relationship Information, page 5 of the LSI Form.

"Were you included or on the periphery?"

"How did the other kids regard and accept you?"

"How did your parents accept your choice of friends?"

"In what kinds of play did you engage?"

"What kinds of groups did you join?"

"Did you play with peers, younger kids, older kids, or kids of the other sex?" "What kind of kids were available?"

"Were you a 'friend to all mankind' or did you have a few close friends?"

"What was your role in the group (e.g., leader, clown, goat, idea man)?"

"How did you feel about your social life?"

"Were you different in any way from the others in your neighborhood?"

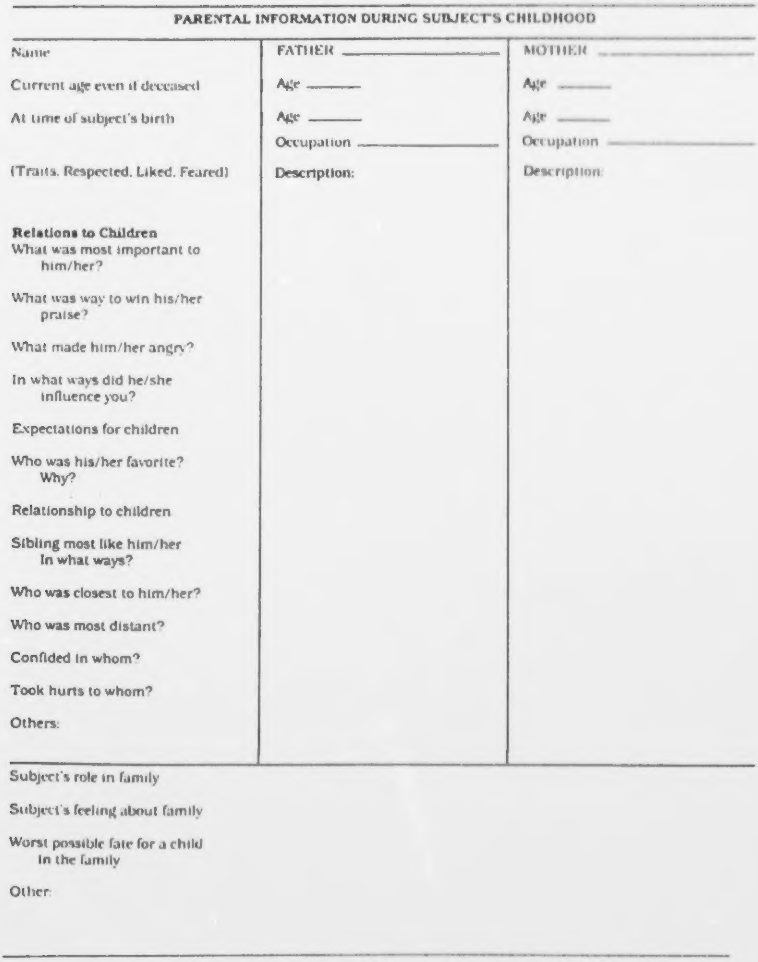
PARENTAL INFORMATION DURING SUBJECT'S CHILDHOOD

(Page 6 of the LSI Form)

Pages 6 and 7 of the form permit recording information concerning any persons who served as parents or parent-surrogates. These include step-parents, foster parents, grandparents who actually reared the children, and so forth. The respondent may have experienced, and will describe, more than two parents. The following instructions describe the recording system used by us for page 6 (Figure 4.11).

6-1 Record father's and mother's names.

These names may disclose ethnic background. One of the children may be a "Jr." or "III," which may reveal expectations or socio-economic status (Mosak & Mosak, 1979).



PARENTAL INFORMATION DURING SUBJECT'S CHILDHOOD

Name	FATHER ________	MOTHER ________
Current age even if deceased	Age ____	Age ____
At time of subject's birth	Age ____ Occupation ________	Age ____ Occupation ________
(Traits. Respected. Liked. Feared)	Description:	Description:
Relations to Children What was most important to him/her?		
What was way to win his/her praise?		
What made him/her angry?		
In what ways did he/she influence you?		
Expectations for children		
Who was his/her favorite? Why?		
Relationship to children		
Sibling most like him/her In what ways?		
Who was closest to him/her?		
Who was most distant?		
Confided in whom?		
Took hurts to whom?		
Others:		

Subject's role in family

Subject's feeling about family

Worst possible fate for a child in the family

Other:

Figure 4.11. Parental Information During Subject's Childhood, page 6 of the LSI Form.

6-2 Record parents' current ages, even if deceased.

This permits the rapid subtractions required in Items 6-4 and 6-5.

6-3 For parents who are deceased, place parentheses about the age.

Next to the parentheses, make statements as in Item 1-5. As in that item, note the circumstances surrounding the death, the family's reaction to it, and any changes in the family climate, family fortunes. Was the family broken as a result of the death?

6-4 Compare the parents' ages.

If great disparity exists, one of the parents may have been married previously. The possibility also exists that the much younger parent may occupy psychologically the position of the oldest sibling.

6-5 Compare the parents' ages with those of the children.

In some instances, children will be reared by older, tired parents; in others, married at a young age, they are hardly more than children themselves. The older children may have been reared by young parents and the younger children by old parents.

6-6 For each parent, record his/her occupation(s).

In this context, we are primarily concerned with occupations held during the respondent's childhood. In addition to the factual information, we may derive other types of information, e.g., "My father could never hold a job." "My mother was so busy as a club-woman and raising money for charity that we never saw her."

References to work stability, responsibility, and satisfaction, alcoholism, ambition, and socio-economic status may be elicited at this point in the interview.

6-7 "When you were a child, what was your father like?"

Again, we permit the subject to give a spontaneous description. The interviewer should stress that what is wanted are the subject's perceptions when a child rather than an adult retrospective view. The latter information, while useful for other purposes, is not required for life style assessment. Information obtained here describes the parents as models for observational learning and what and how parents reinforced. When the subject completes the spontaneous description, we ask questions which will enable us to fill in whatever gaps in the data we feel still remain, such as: "What did you most like about him? Dislike?" What was his characteristic facial expression?" "What sort of remark did he usually make to you?"

One may also ask specific questions: "Was he warm, cheerful, bossy, a good provider, have good habits, etc."

These following questions (6-8 through 6-12) furnish information about standards, expectations and pressures placed upon the children. These questions give us some information about parental values and more.

6-8 "What was most important to father?"

This is an attempt to elicit what father valued. It may have been good grades, good behavior, athletic ability or cuteness.

6-9 "What was the way to win father's praise?"

Similar to 6-8, but an attempt to discover what father reinforced and who did what in trying to win praise.

6-10 "What made father angry?"

This continues the subject of 6-8 and 6-9 and gives clues to how father used anger in his relationships to the children.

6-11 "In what way did father influence you?"

Was father a positive or negative model? Did he encourage or discourage?

6-12 "What were your father's expectations for the family?"

We also may ask which of the children responded to these expectations, whether they accepted or rejected them, whether they drove themselves to achieve those goals, or whether they defaulted or withdrew and whether they wanted to or felt they could please the parents.

Some useful questions that may be asked at this point are,

"What did Father want you to be?" "Not to be?"

"When was he happy with you?" "Unhappy?"

6-13 "Who was father's favorite? Why?"

This question and subsequent ones provide information concerning parent-child relationships. Favored children often feel more secure in their place in the family. The child who was favored by no one may have felt rejected. The information permits us to discover who felt left out, which child may have been favored by all the adults, whether boys were preferred over girls, or oldest children favored by one parent and rejected by another. The last such child may later have difficulties with rejectors but relate well with those who like him. It is often useful to ask who was least favored by each parent. A parent may have had more than one favorite.

6-14 "What was the relationship between father and children like?"

The relationship between parents and children constitutes a dyadic process (Mosak, 1980). Each influences the other. We are interested in whether the parents were perceived as pampering, frightening, loving, rejecting, not available, disapproving, inconsistent, or having excessive standards. We also explore whether the children lived up to parental expectations or rebelled and whether the parents lived up to the subject's expectations.

Considerable redundance is in these questions so that one may not have to ask all of them to elicit the desired information. The redundance encourages elaboration by the subject and also picks up contradictions that need to be investigated.

After the subject's spontaneous description, we may ask,

"Were you ever afraid of him? When?"

"Were you ever confused by him? When?"

"Did you enjoy being with him or did you feel uncomfortable around him?"

"Was he home a reasonable amount of time?"

"Did you try to please him? How?"

"Did he play with you, teach you, advise you, help you, etc.?"

"Did you try to please him? How?"

Sometimes a useful procedure is to inquire, "When you were small, what did you do to get him to pay attention to you?"

6-15 "Which of the siblings was most like father and in what ways?"

The subject may state that one sibling was more like father in looks and another more like father in temperament or traits. This information helps us determine which siblings followed father's guiding line and how. Sometimes the parent is regarded as such a negative model that the respondent will say that none of the siblings was like the parent.

6-16 "Who was the closest to father?" "Did he demonstrate affection?"

As in questions 6-13 and 6-14, these questions elicit information about the family atmosphere, the kind of order, and presence or absence of warmth.

6-17 "Who was most distant from Father?"

Unless father was a negative model, the child's withdrawal from father suggests a discouragment and feeling that father will reject. It suggests problems in relating to older males later in life.

6-18 Repeat Items 6-7 through 6-17 with respect to mother.

In some families, especially those broken by death or divorce, additional parents or foster parents may be included. List them on a separate sheet and repeat items 6-7 through 6-17 for these additional parents, if it seems indicated.

When divorce occurred, we inquire when the divorce took place, what changes in living arrangements and family fortunes occurred, and how each sibling reacted.

If one parent died, the subject may have had to live with grandparents, other relatives, or foster parents. These surrogate parents should be included on page 7. The subject's reaction to this placement should be recorded. Even if the subject cannot remember a missing parent, one should inquire about that parent. In some families the dead parent is idealized and perhaps canonized.

6-19 Confided in whom?

"To whom did you go when you wanted to share a confidence?" Such information should show us which parent the child trusted more and felt closer to.

6-20 Took hurts to whom?

"To whom did you go when you were in trouble?" Sometimes the answer tells us who was more trusted, but sometimes it tells us which parent was considered to have more power—who could set things right again.

6-21 "What was your role in family?"

Record the response on bottom part of page 6 (Figure 4.11). The subject may use terms such as, "I was the baby", "I was mama's helper" if sophisticated enough. Some subjects may not be able to give such answers but can still say "I just did what I was told and minded my own business" or " I was just like other kids."

6-22 "What were your feelings about the family?"

Was the subject a critic of the family? Take a tragic view of the family? Have strong family loyalty? Become distant from family?

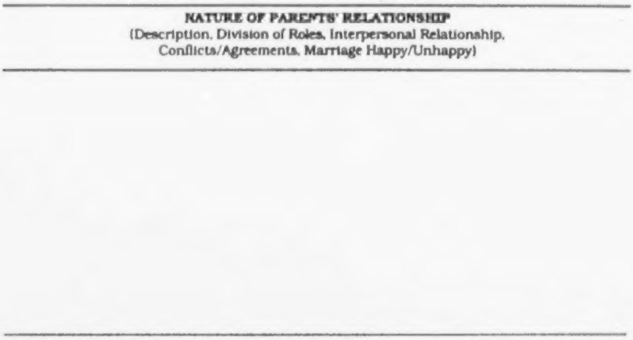
6-23 "What was the worst possible fate for a child in the family?"

This tells us what the family considered utter failure and disappointment in a child or what would lead the family to label the child as the most inferior family member.

NATURE OF PARENTS' RELATIONSHIP
(Top One-Third of Page 7 of the LSI Form)

7-1 "What was the nature of the relationship between your father and your mother?"

Many clients will simply indicate that it was good or poor. While this evaluative comment is important, we also wish to understand the nature as well as the quality of the parent-parent interaction while the child was young. As information is obtained, record it at the top of page 7 (Figure 4.12). We are interested in such information as shown in the heading of Figure 4.12.



NATURE OF PARENTS' RELATIONSHIP
(Description, Division of Roles, Interpersonal Relationship,
Conflicts/Agreements, Marriage Happy/Unhappy)

Figure 4.12. Nature of Parents' Relationship, page 7 of the LSI Form.

Who was the dominant parent?

The decision maker?

Handled the money?

Was responsible for discipline?

We also try to learn whether the parents did things together or merely lived together under the same roof. If the parents fought, we inquire how the fights were resolved, how the children reacted, and with whom they sided.

Inconsistencies, countermanding of orders which permit a child to play off one parent against the other, also are important to ascertain. We anticipate that the relationship displayed between the parents will present a model of adult male-female relationships.

These parent-parent interactions can be described along several dimensions. After the subject has described the relationship in his/her own terms, we ask further questions to establish certain dimensions of the relationships. These will be the models (positive or negative) for many of one's future male-female relationships, one's expectancies and relationship style. The dimensions we want to discover can be seen in the following group of opposites:

pleasant-unpleasant

affectionate-unloving

close-distant

conflictful-harmonious

cooperative-each for himself

playful-lacked humor

In addition, the relationship may have been authoritarian, with one parent dominating and perhaps even tyrannizing the other. By questioning, one can investigate how each coped with the other (e.g., "Mother was the boss. Father never argued with her, but he'd just go out and get drunk.") Other specific questions will suggest themselves to the interviewer during the course of the interview.

OTHER FAMILY INFORMATION (7-2)

(Middle One-Third of Page 7 of the LSI Form)

In this space provided in middle one-third of page 7 we record such data as the following:

OTHER FAMILY INFORMATION
(Family Climate, Family Values, Socio-economic Status, Ethnicity, Religion)

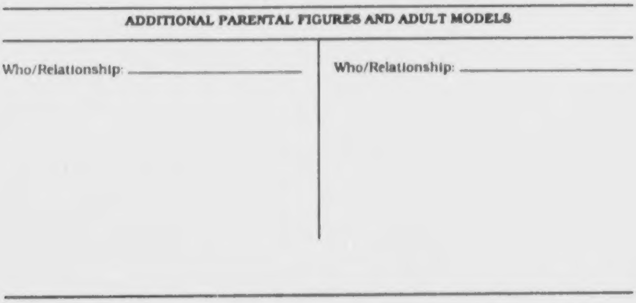
Figure 4.13. Other Family Information, page 7 of the LSI Form.

1. What was the nature of the family climate? Was it a happy house? Were there many arguments? Was it peaceful or full of turmoil?
2. Was the family religious? Did the parents try to teach moral standards? Was ethical behavior important?
3. What was the family's socio-economic status? Were there any important changes in this status?
4. What was the family's cultural or ethnic background? Was it stressed by the parents?
5. What were the family values? What was stated to be important in the family? What really was important?
6. How was the family regarded in the neighborhood?
7. Were there any other family characteristics? Family myths? Family secrets?

ADDITIONAL PARENTAL FIGURES AND ADULT MODELS (7-3)

(Bottom One-Third of Page 7 of the LSI Form)

This section includes a description of any people who lived with the family during the client's childhood as well as other adults who may have played a significant role in the child's development. Such adults include grandparents, uncles and aunts, boarders, maids, an occasional teacher, Boy Scout leader, or parish priest. The information is recorded on the lower one-third of page 7 (Figure 4.14). The subject is asked to describe the client's relationship to each of these people. Some of the questions suggested on page 6 may be asked here.



ADDITIONAL PARENTAL FIGURES AND ADULT MODELS

Who/Relationship: ____________

Who/Relationship: ____________

Figure 4.14. Additional Parental Figures and Adult Models, page 7 of the LSI Form.

This concludes the material that will be used in the formulation of the family constellation.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS (ER)
(Pages 8 and 9 of the LSI Form)

8-1 **"Go as far back as you can in childhood. When you go back, what early memory comes to your mind?"** Another way to ask for early recollections is to say, **"Think back, as far back as you can. What is the first incident you can remember from your life? Something about which you can say, "One day I remember..."**

After the ER is recorded verbatim (Figure 4.10), the examiner can choose to go on to the next memory or may choose to investigate this one further. The particular method we describe here is to collect the series of ER first and then to explore them further.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS
(Under age 10) (Description, Most Vivid Part, Feelings)

1. Age ______________ :

2. Age ______________ :

3. Age ______________ :

4. Age ______________ :

Figure 4.15. Early Recollections, page 8 of the LSI Form. (Page 9, part 2 of this section, is identical, so not shown.)

8-2 "What is your next memory?" or "What memory comes to your mind next?"

The memories need not be obtained in chronological order; the order in which the subject chooses to give them will be good enough. Continue until the subject has no more ER or begins only to recall events later than age eight or nine.

Pages 8 and 9 of the LSI form (Figure 4.15) have space for eight recollections. Additional pages may be used for additional ER but more than eight are rarely needed by the assessor. Most subjects give fewer than eight ER unless specifically primed.

How does the assessor know when one has elicited enough ER? The answer is—when the themes in the ER begin to repeat themselves. This can be best shown by giving a few examples:

Female—age 32—(the ER are presented in the order the subject gave them).

1. Age 3: I was riding on the big farm tractor with my father. I caught my foot between the wheel and the side of the tractor and it rubbed the skin off my foot. I remember my father carried me home and took me to the doctor who bandaged my foot. I cried, but I was glad my father was there.

2. Age 3: I was playing with my sister Ann and her dolls. We made a tea party and pretended we were feeding the dolls. I wanted to feed my stuffed teddy bear, but Ann said "No" because he wasn't human like a doll. I didn't feed the teddy bear, but I felt bad for him.

3. Age 5: In school I had to go to the bathroom, but I was embarrassed to ask. I sat with the older children, feeling uncomfortable. Finally, I went to the teacher and whispered it to her and she let me go.

4. Age 6 or 7: I was fighting with another girl. I don't know how it started. She hit me in the stomach and I cried. She called me a sissy and the other kids were laughing at me.

These four ER show a repetition of a theme. In ER 1 and 3, the subject experiences relationships with adults as nurturing, while in 2 and 4, relationships with peers are less satisfactory. Each theme has been repeated. If the next ER again repeats the theme, the assessor can consider this a natural stopping place.

After the series of ER is collected, a useful procedure is to review them with the subject. This gives the subject a chance to amend the recollections by changing, elaborating, or adding details.

8-3 "Are there any other details you can recall about this memory?"

Not only details, but some important background material may be elicited here. The memory in Chapter 3 of the man whose father had smothered the rest of the family is a dramatic example of how knowing background affects our interpretation of an ER.

8-4 "Do you recall how you felt at the time?"

This question is not asked if the subject has already described the feeling during the course of giving the ER. In essence, we are asking for an additional detail of a particular type. Excitement-seekers tend to recall more intense feelings than repressors. The latter, being "feeling-avoiders," may give ER in which no personal feelings are contained. Excitement-seeking is an emotional style. [Compare the sensation-seeking motive of Zuckerman (1979).]

The memory "It was Christmas. I got an electric train," would not be complete without the feeling response, "I was disappointed. I wanted a bicycle."

8-5 "What is the most vivid part of the recollection?" or "What part stands out most clearly in your mind?"

This is comparable to a "stop-action" when running a movie film. The "stop-action" contains the essence of the recollection. For example:

> "I was between two and three. Summery day. I was playing outside. I came inside and there was a drawer sticking out. I ran into it and cut my head. My mother got upset, angry and concerned. I felt I had done something wrong. I was bleeding. My mother took me to the hospital . . ."

Asked for the most vivid part of the early recollections, she responded, "The strongest is running into the house, seeing the drawer open, and not being able to stop."

The essence of the ER consists of her warning to herself of the danger of losing control over her own behavior.

When the subject cannot easily recall ER, sometimes primed ER can be elicited by asking the subject to recall a specific event. Some useful questions for priming an ER are as follows:

> ***"Do you remember when your brother (sister) was born?"***
>
> ***Do you remember your first day in school?"***
>
> ***"Do you remember a birthday? A Christmas?"***
>
> ***"Do you ever recall being sick? Frightened? Angry?"***

Knowing some details of the subject's life from the FC will often suggest other priming questions to the assessor. Remember that a primed ER is not completely spontaneous and may be less significant than spontaneous ER.

We do not ask subjects to "Make up an ER" because we do not consider such "ER" interchangeable with actual memories. They do not have the power to display the core constructs that we find in the actual memories.

SUMMARY OF FAMILY CONSTELLATION (10-1)

(Top One-Half of Page 10 of the LSI Form)

This space is provided to enable you to summarize information related to the family. See Figure 4.16.

SUMMARY OF FAMILY CONSTELLATION

Figure 4.16. Summary of Family Constellation, page 10 of the LSI Form.

SUMMARY OF EARLY RECOLLECTIONS (10-2)
(Bottom One-Half of Page 10 of the LSI Form)

This space is provided to enable you to summarize information related to early recollections. See Figure 4.17.

SUMMARY OF EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

Figure 4.17. Summary of Early Recollections, page 10 of the LSI Form.

INTERFERING ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, BEHAVIORS (11-1)
(Top One-Half of Page 11 of the LSI Form)

This space is provided to summarize attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that may be interfering with each other and/or the client. See Figure 4.18.

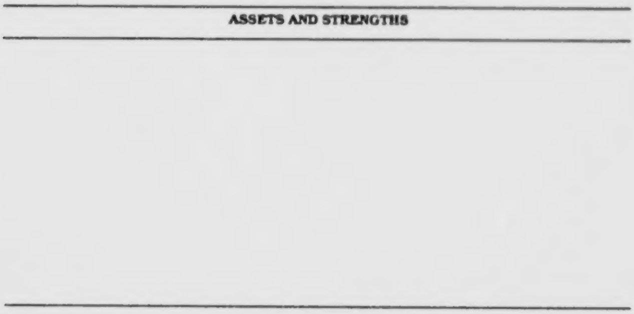
INTERFERING ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, BEHAVIORS

Figure 4.18. Interfering Attitudes, Beliefs, Behaviors, page 11 of the LSI Form.

ASSETS AND STRENGTHS (11-2)

(Bottom One-Half of Page 11 of the LSI Form)

This space is provided to enable you to summarize the assets and strengths of the client. See Figure 4.19.



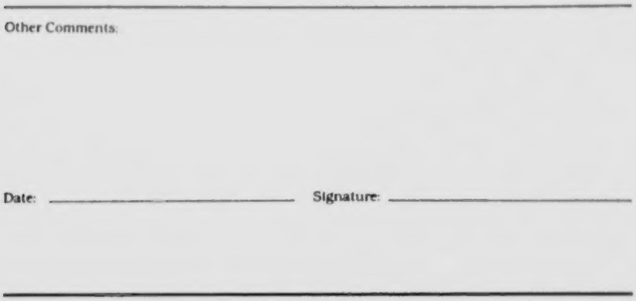
ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

Figure 4.19. Assets and Strengths, page 11 of the LSI Form.

DATE AND SIGNATURE (12-1)

(Bottom of Page 12 of LSI Form)

Space is provided on lower part of page 12 for you to record other comments. Then date and sign the LSI to provide a record of when and who did the interview. See Figure 4.20.



Other Comments:

Date: ______________ Signature: ______________

Figure 4.20. Other Comments, Date, and Signature, page 12 of the LSI Form.

SUMMARY

In Chapter 4 we have described how data are gathered and recorded on the LSI form. From time to time in this chapter we have made interpretive comments about the meaning of the data. In Chapter 5 we will describe in detail how the data are interpreted and put in logical order.

CHAPTER 5

FAMILY CONSTELLATION (FC)

THE PROCESS AND CONTENT OF INTERPRETATION

Our purpose is to use the information from the family constellation (FC) to elicit the life style of the subject we are studying. We shall look at the subject's early life situation as a piece of that person's history which gives us information about formative influences. We will be looking for personality information. We hope to discern the terrain and the action that took place upon it, the early adventurous course of the person, and the answers that he/she gave to the meaning of life.

In order to do this we must have a set of constructs, a theory, which tells us where to look and for what to look. We must know how to recognize formative influences, how and what they influenced and what the outcome was. In our theory the family is an ecological system in which the children seek for what all children seek—nurture, recognition, affiliation, security, and guiding lines for living. However, the family is also a social system with its attendant hierarchical structure, with its jockeying for position, allies and competitors, values, dominance issues, and self-identification as a family member.

In treating early experiences as formative, we are assuming that they are more important than later experiences. We are claiming that the early learning influences later learning, that both disabling attitudes (discouragement) and enabling attitudes develop early and influence later behavior.

We have divided the content of the FC into a number of categories. Each category pays attention to a specific aspect of the FC, yet they are all interrelated in producing the final personality inventory. Each category is important in that it is either (1) a set of challenges which require a response, (2) a set of models for selecting a response style, (3) a set of contingencies which influence response, or (4) a set of responses themselves. In each category, we will try to trace developmental antecendents of the response styles and perceptual framework of the subject. These categories are birth order, constitution and gender, models, interpersonal transactions, family climate, family values, cultural values, roles, and the existential meaning of life.

Birth Order and Its Outcome

We have previously discussed the distinctions between ordinal position, birth order, and psychological position. While we may use birth order as the general term, the psychological position is what is most important to us, since the inferences we draw are based upon our perception of the subject's psychological position within the sibling array. Several examples will hopefully clarify what we can learn from birth order.

Example 5.1. A three-child family: Boy-Girl-Boy

John	Mary*	Jim
+2		-4

The subject is the only girl in the family and may have had a secure position of significance by virtue of this fact. On the other hand, the family values may have been such that the female role had less significance than the male role and she may have decided to compete with her brothers. The more significant competitor is usually the one closer in age, and thus we may expect that she would pit herself against John, either trying to outdo him or to distinguish herself by developing role-skills that were vastly different from his. In some cases, however, the family values provide equal but different role expectations for each gender, so that what looks like competition may actually only be the different role-enactments belonging to gender differences.

John's role in the family may have given him so much preeminence that Mary may have become discouraged. In this case, her self-perception may be a negative one. If Jim also attains a preeminent role, then Mary will become a "squeezed middle child." Another common outcome is possible. In some families, boys are expected to achieve while girls are expected to behave properly. Assume that John becomes an achiever in school and Jim becomes an athlete. Mary can follow the expected gender-associated role of being the "good girl" who is kind and helpful and no doubt will receive much parental reinforcement for such behavior.

We have drawn a number of inferences from the simple diagram at the beginning of this example. Were we to continue to collect the FC data in Mary's case, we would soon learn what the actual outcome was.

Example 5.2. A six-child family: Boy-Girl-Girl-Boy-Boy-Girl

William	Alice	Cynthia	Bert	Sam*	Jewel
+10	[+8]	+4	+2		-3

Alice died when Sam was two.

The subject is the fifth of six and the youngest boy in the family. In this case, a notable discrepancy exists between the first and third which was created when the second child died. Depending on how strong the memory of the deceased remains in the family, we may find that William plays the role of an adult model rather than a sibling and in effect, for the purposes of understanding Sam, we may do better considering him the third in a sibling array of four. The only thing we can tell about William at this point is that he is the first-born son and seems to have no rivals near him. Perhaps he was overprotected after Alice died, a piece of information we will only know later. If gender roles were strongly typed and the brothers and sisters did not compete with each other, the subject is, in effect, the younger of two boys. Another possibility is that Cynthia may have played a protective role toward Sam, assisting him in his rivalry with Bert. Or, Sam and Bert may have formed an alliance against the two girls surrounding them, forming a macho male group among the siblings. We can see that a large number of outcomes may develop from the array we have diagrammed. Again, subsequent FC data will reveal the outcome. The diagram, however, permits us to start drawing inferences.

Constitution and Gender and Their Outcome

Physical disabilities, both congenital (organ inferiority) (Adler, 1917) and acquired, may stimulate the person to some kind of psychic compensation, in which case they become important in the structure of the personality. The common possible consequences of disability are (1) compensation, (2) overcompensation, (3) effects on the behavior of others toward the disability, and (4) effects on the child's own self-concept.

Compensation is the act of developing another ability to make up for a felt deficiency from a disability. Thus, a child with a club foot who cannot run may learn to excel in swimming. Such compensation may become a significant aspect of striving and is generalized to other functions.

Overcompensation is the term used to describe that situation in which an organ inferiority leads to behavior which turns a minus into a plus. Thus, the child with weak eyes becomes a painter of beautiful pictures, the one with digestive disturbances becomes a master chef, etc.

Effects on others influence how the child will be perceived by others and how the child will use the disability in interaction with others. If parents pay great attention to the disability, pamper the child, and excuse the child from certain onerous responsibilities, the child may learn to offer the disability as an excuse for requesting special exemption from tasks.

Some physical disabilities lead to pity and sympathy, others to teasing or rejection. In the LSI completion, an important step is to ask how the child responded to the disability so as to ascertain its effect on the child's self-concept.

For example, in Chapter 4 we described how a subject answered "What were you like as a child?" with the statement, "I was fat." When the spontaneous description is ended, the interviewer may ask, "What effect did it have on you?" The subject's answer may be, "I never liked my body," indicating a negative self-concept. On the other hand, "My mother always said I had a jolly disposition" points to a behavioral compensation for the feeling of inferiority associated with being fat. If the mother liked children who looked well-fed, she may well have given positive reinforcement in the form of approval. On the other hand, jibes and taunts from siblings and peers may have increased the subject's feelings of inferiority associated with being fat.

Gender. Physical disabilities are not always present, but gender is. In a patriarchal setting, with overvaluation of masculinity, what Adler (1958) termed the "masculine protest," i.e., being female may be experienced as an inferiority, with subsequent compensatory strivings. In societies which value male and female children equally, the child still must respond to the reality of gender and to the fact that humans come in two gender varieties, male and female. The FC will show what kind of gender identification each sibling made, how happy each was with his/her gender, how competent each felt in the gender role and how each defined the role.

Successful compensation for feelings of inferiority associated with disability or gender implies that the subject was not discouraged by the feeling of inferiority and adapted in a way that had positive effects on the self-concept. Some attempts to compensate do not necessarily have such a happy outcome. A less than attractive girl may compensate by developing a delightful and pleasing "personality," but in her own self-concept she may retain a negative self-image which leads her to feel discouraged about her sexual attractiveness. The effect on self-concept is perhaps the most crucial consequence of this feeling of inferiority because it will or will not lead to discouragement, the most important agent of withdrawal from life tasks.

Sibling Territories

In addition to birth order, constitution and gender, influences upon the interactions between the siblings themselves are important. We can use the model of an ecological system to conceptualize how each sibling finds a suitable territory of responses for his/her own strivings, tends to guard this territory against unwanted intrusions by others, and in turn tends to avoid areas not appropriate to self. This system is similar to that found in any social animal group. Dominance and cooperation interactions are established by the parents. The possible range of behaviors is limited by this microculture and no doubt also by human genetic programming.

The sibling trait rating list on pages two and three of the LSI form is the most convenient guide to sibling territories. Perusal of these ratings will reveal that they can be divided into several territory areas. Thus, the first two ratings, ***intelligence*** and ***grades,*** represent the academic achievement area. A later group—***daring, assertive, patient, methodical, neat, persistent***—represents an area which deals with the methods of approach to life situations. This rating list contains deliberate redundancies, as every good inventory list should, in order to increase the opportunity to elicit the sibling territories and to clarify for the examiner the confusion that may occur when the question words have different meanings for the subject than they do for the examiner.

Example 5.2 shows how the subject's answers clarify territorial divisions. In that example the subject's brother is portrayed as being more socially successful, while the subject himself avoided the territory, considering himself unsuccessful in it.

In Table 5.1 is shown how the trait ratings can be grouped into territory areas.

O'Phelan (1977) studied this rating system and found that it could be sorted into six categories of attributes, all of which would seem to have an important relationship to life style. The categories were (1) achievement, (2) social proprieties, (3) interpersonal mechanics, (4) right-wrong, (5) posture, and (6) gender.

TABLE 5.1

Trait Ratings Comprising Territory Areas Among Siblings and Typical Questions Which Help Elicit the Information

Area, and trait ratings that define it	Additional questions which help to define the area.
Academic intelligence grades	Who went the furthest in school?
Helpfulness helpful around house industrious responsible	Who liked to do things for others?
Ambitious striving highest standards of achievement actual achievement idealism materialism industrious	Who was the most interested in what he/she could "get?" Who was a perfectionist? Who was the hardest worker?
Method of activity daring assertive patient methodical neat persistent excitement seeker impulsive	Who would give up most easily when the going got tough? Who would most often finish what he/she started? Who was the most logical? Who was the most cautious?
Compliance/opposition responsible obedient mischievious open rebellion covert rebellion	Who gave the parents the most trouble? Who got into trouble in school?

TABLE 5.1 (Continued)

Sociability	
sociable	Who had the most friends?
charm	Who could make friends the most easily?
pleasing	
outgoing	
cheerful	
considerate	
shy	
withdrawn	
Personal dominance	
bossy	Who had to be a big shot?
demanded way	Who was the crybaby?
got way	Who picked on others?
temper	Who put others down?
fights	Who was the most argumentative?
chip on shoulder	
sulked	Who was the leader in play?
stubborn	
sensitive and easily hurt	
critical of others	
complained	
took advantage of others	
would not submit to dominance	
Dependence/independence	
responsible	Who took good care of his /her own things?
self-reliant	
pampered	Who struck out on his/her own the earliest?
sure of self	
Morality	
standards of right and wrong	Who made the fuss if things weren't absolutely fair?
critical of self	Who just had to have his/her own way?
easy-going	
took advantage of others	
idealistic	
materialistic	
sense of humor	
Control/accommodation	
excitable	Who got upset if plans didn't work out?
worried	
impulsive	Who was most irritable?
Gender areas	
masculine	How was each one masculine/feminine?
feminine	
athletic	

Trait ratings such as intelligence, grades, industry, helpfulness, and standards of achievement were in the achievement category. Social propriety included charm, pleasing, consideration, selfishness, and sociability. The category of interpersonal mechanics included assertiveness, bossiness, temper, humor, sulking, stubbornness, shyness, and sensibility. The right-wrong category included obedience, rebellion, fairness, standards of right and wrong, and critical behavior. Posture included ratings on idealism, materialism, persistence, giving up, neatness, excitement seeking, complaining, taking responsibility, withdrawal, dependency, self-reliance, hostility (chip on shoulder) and being recipient of punishment. The gender category, in addition to masculinity and femininity, included socially-typed gender behavior such as athletics, being daring, and physical appearance (looks). These are listed in Table 5.2.

Each of these areas offers the child an opportunity to carve out a personal territory of operation; that is, an area of successful striving for significance with its accompanying positive self-esteem and increased feeling of security and competence in the area. Successful striving for significance need not be identical with what we conventionally call "success." For example, a child may find an important position in the family by behaving in a dependent and helpless way and gain much parental attention thereby. Territories are avoided when they do not promise sufficient reward or the child does not feel able to cope with the area. In the latter areas, the child will either have no interest in entering the area (because it offers no reward), will actively avoid it (because it promises negative feedback), or will carve out a partial place in the territory which helps achieve one goal, but does not provide an increase in status or self-esteem. An example of the last would be the child who uses crying and sensitivity as a way of manipulating others to grant his/her wishes (power tactic). Since the child is using methods associated with dependence and insecurity, what is wanted may be obtained from others but the child may retain feelings of inferiority.

The child who avoids an area for fear of incompetence is spoken of as ***discouraged*** from the area. According to level of aspiration studies, the child will enjoy doing most what gives it the most feeling of success and will be quickly satiated (lose interest) by failure (Lewin, 1935).

TABLE 5.2
Trait Ratings Grouped by Territory Areas
(Based on study by O'Phelan, 1977)

Categories of Attributes	**Traits Ratings**
Achievement	Intelligence
	Grades
	Industry
	Helpfulness
	Standards of Achievement
Social	Charm
	Pleasing
	Consideration
	Selfishness
	Sociability
Interpersonal Mechanics	Assertiveness
	Bossiness
	Temper
	Humor
	Sulking
	Stubbornness
	Shyness
	Sensibility
Right-Wrong	Obedience
	Rebellion
	Fairness
	Standards of Right and Wrong
	Critical Behavior
Posture	Idealism
	Materialism
	Persistence
	Giving up
	Neatness
	Excitement Seeking
	Complaining
	Taking Responsibility
	Withdrawal
	Dependency
	Self-reliance
	Hostility (Chip on Shoulder)
	Recipient of Punishment
Gender	Masculinity
	Femininity
	Social-typed Gender
	Athletics
	Being Daring
	Physical Appearance (Looks)

In Table 5.3 is a condensed trait rating for quickly showing the territories selected by each of three siblings.

TABLE 5.3
An Example of Sibling Territories

	Merton +8	Donald +6	Lily*
Intelligence	M	L	+
Grades	+	L	M
Helped around the house (the boys worked the farm with Father)			M
Responsible	M	L	+
Considerate	M	L	+
Easy-going	L	M	—
Cheerful	L	M	+
Mischievous	L	M	—
Self-reliant	+	M	L
Temper	+	M	L

M = most
L = least
+ = the behavior was present
— = the behavior was generally lacking

In this brief survey of some of the ratings is shown that the first-born brother took responsibility, academic success and helpfulness as his territories, while the second-born took self-reliance, opposition and sociability as his. The subject easily fits into the role of the only female who did not compete with her brothers. Compliance was her territory. She added, "They teased me because I was a girl, but I learned not to mind them. I was close to Mother." She found her place in the female world and was successfully immune to the attempts of the males to depreciate her.

Parental and Other Models and Their Effects

In most families, parents model adult behavior and values for the young. However, for the child with older siblings, these also become important models at an early age. Because the life style is relatively established by the age of five or six, according to Individual Psychology, later models tend to interact with already established perceptions and more often than not, reinforce them. The behavior and values expressed by these early models will help to define all the important aspects of social roles—location, expectations, demands and so on.

Example 5.3. Parental modeling.

Subject is Lucy. Age 21.

Father: 48 years. Occupation: Engineer

Father was kind and sweet. But once in a while he used to get angry at my brother because he got bad grades in school. He was fun on family vacations. I used to wish he made more money.

Who was his favorite?

I think I was. I was the first child and he spent more time with me than with the others. We had long talks with each other.

Expectations for the children?

I think he would have liked my brother to be an engineer. When I said I wanted to be a teacher, he was happy.

Relationship to children?

He was Mr. Fixit. He could fix anything in the house and we'd ask him for help. He left the disciplining up to Mother, but he'd argue with my brother about school.

Sibling most like father?

I have a lot of his interests, but my brother has a sweet disposition like him.

Mother: 44 years. Occupation: Housewife.

Mother used to tell me to go to college and get a profession so I wouldn't have to be dependent on a man. She used to complain about father not making more money and not dressing better. She came from a more prominent family and I think she looked down on father's family. She was more of a scold, but she was always nice when we were sick or hurt. She wasn't as warm as father.

Favorite?

My brother was. He gave her more trouble, but she liked him better.

Why?

When I got older, I used to criticize her and we'd argue a lot. She wanted me to help more around the house and I was lazy. My brother helped her more.

Most like mother?

I guess I am. I criticize like she does.

Relationship between the parents?

> They used to argue because mother was always complaining. I think Mother had her way most of the time. I used to feel she was wrong in criticizing father. But, they also used to get along very well sometimes, because father was so loving.

The male model is thus a kind, loving man who can "fix" anything and can even sometimes win over the critical mother. The female model is more dominant and establishes dominance by being critical. Her dominance is tempered by Father's ability to win her over. Their interpersonal relationship thus models a balance in which each partner holds his/her own ground, knows what to do, how to maintain a good relationship and how to overcome conflict. Thus, from the information about the relationship between the parents, we can infer role definitions for each parent and a set of cognitive instructions for how men and women are supposed to behave with each other.

The subject is obviously more critical, like Mother, and accepts Mother's recommendation that she seek a profession (teacher). She learns a definition of the female role from both parents: A woman is critical of a man and is loved by him.

Example 5.4a. Sibling modeling. Learning how to be significant by watching an older sibling. Martin is 26.

Harry	Martin*
+4	

What was Harry like as a child?

> He was always in trouble. He didn't like school and he had the wrong kind of friends. When he was older, he got into trouble with the police. I felt sorry for him. Everything he did seemed to get him into trouble.

What were you like as a child?

> I was the opposite of Harry. I liked school and didn't cause my parents any trouble. They used to ask him why he couldn't be more like me, which I thought was wrong. I could see how he always got into trouble. I thought it was easy to stay on the good side of people.

In this case, Harry is a negative model for Martin. By behaving the opposite of Harry, Martin develops a significant role for himself. In this family, Harry is, of course, also significant. His difficulties make him the center of family attention.

Example 5.4b. Being discouraged by a model. Jim is 22.

Robert   Jim*
+4

What were you like as a child?

> I never felt I could be as good as my older brother. He was a better student. He had a lot of friends and he was a good athlete. The only thing I could do was sing and dance. I used to entertain at family gatherings and that got me a lot of attention, but I was never interested in school or sports. He was a real jock, and I started to get into drugs at an early age.

A model may thus be someone to emulate or someone to avoid emulating. A model defines a role, displays role-skills and expresses role demands, which one may or may not feel able to meet.

Family Values and Their Effects

Family values define important aspects of life for the child—they help define what is significant, what **is** reinforced, what is success, and what is failure (when one can have a positive self-concept and when one can have a negative one). The values provide guidelines for acceptable roles in the family and later on in meeting the life tasks. Values are expressed by the models in their own behavior and in the interaction with each other and with the subject (what they actually ***do,*** rather than what they ***say***).

Individual Psychologists have never constructed an exhaustive list of family values, which is perhaps a lack in the theory. Nevertheless, they are frequently discussed in the Individual Psychology literature, both in the writings about methods of rearing children and about maladaptive deviation. For example, some parents will require obedience from their children; others will require academic excellence, helpful behavior, and so forth.

As we have previously mentioned, family values are demands upon family members which require a response from the child.

Maladaptive deviation in Individual Psychology theory is the consequence of faulty perceptions and faulty values. A common example occurs in what Individual Psychologists call overambition, e.g., "Unless I can be the best, I'm not worthwhile" or "I must never let anyone get ahead of me." The list of mistaken attitudes in Chapter 1 contains many examples of faulty family values.

> **Example 5.5.** A clearly stated value.
>
> **What were father's ambitions for the children?**
>
> > He wanted us to do well in school. He was always pleased when we brought home good grades.
>
> **Did he actually say he wanted good grades from you?**
>
> > Yes. He used to tell us that unless we got an education we couldn't amount to anything. He always felt he never had enough education.

Note that the real family value was that **one should amount to something** and education was the pathway to it. Good grades became a symbol that one was on the way toward amounting to something.

Example 5.6. An unstated value.

What did your parents want you to be?

> They used to say I could be anything I wanted, but they weren't happy when I went to acting school. From the way they acted, I think they wanted me to settle down and marry the boy next door. My brothers could leave town to work, but they wanted me to stay in town.

Family Myths

Family myths are tales which confer status on the family and its members. They function to raise self-esteem, but also to give meaning to the lives of family members. They allow family members to be something special and often exemplify family values. Myths may refer to past family glories, notable ancestors, dramatic episodes in family history, and instances of special luck or special favor.

Some common examples of family myths can be seen below in the following two examples:

Example 5.7. A noted ancestor.

What was Mother's ambition for you?

> She used to tell me that I looked just like my great-uncle, Oswald, who was a famous doctor in Vienna. The whole family admired him and talked about him. She was sure that I would grow up to be a famous doctor.

Example 5.8. A prestigious family background.

What else should I know about your family that may have had an effect on you?

> My father's family was descended from the Lithuanian nobility. We always felt we were a little better than the people in our neighborhood. The family considered itself special and we were very careful whom we chose for friends. One of my aunts married a non-Lithuanian and the family didn't talk to her.

Family Climate (Atmosphere) and Its Effects

Three qualities of the family climate or atmosphere were described in Chapter 2, ***mood, order,*** and ***relationships.*** While the third quality will constantly appear when we interpret interpersonal transactions, it also affects the family climate. While one may ask direct questions about climate, these data usually appear spontaneously when we ask other questions.

Example 5.9. Family mood set by Mother's illness.

What was your mother like?

> She was very unhappy. Now that I look back, I can see that she suffered from long periods of depression. Sometimes she would cry all day. Twice she went to the hospital. It made all of us sad.

Example 5.10. Authoritarian order.

What was your father like?

> Father was very strict and stern. We never dared to disobey him. I was always frightened of him. When my brother was fifteen, he ran away from home because he didn't want to obey Father any more.

Example 5.11. Close and conflicting relationships.

> I came from a loud Italian family. Everybody talked at the top of their voices. We argued all the

> time, but nobody better hurt any of us because we'd all come to that person's defense. We loved each other and we still get together every holiday and argue with each other.

Cultural Values and Social Contingencies and Their Effects

Every family exists within a cultural milieu and for better or worse is influenced by that milieu. The children of immigrant parents may not share many of the parents' cultural values, but those values are still a challenge which require a response. The cultural values in a group with a strong religious identification differ from those in a more secular group. Parents who were children during an economic depression may not understand the outlook of children who grew up during a time of affluence.

Example 5.12. A special cultural value.

What were you like as a child?

> I was the first-born son in a Korean family. It is up to the first-born son to carry the family honor. My younger sister always looked up to me. I was proud of it.

Obviously, the important position of the first-born Korean son makes him someone special, who has special privileges and obligations. This is an example of a cultural value at work.

The contingencies of existence also have effects. Some of them can be seen easily in the broken family.

Example 5.13. A broken family.

> I was five when my mother got sick. She died when I was seven. I missed her very much. When I was nine, my father remarried and I hated my stepmother. I felt he loved her more than he did me.

Interpersonal Transactions and Their Effects

Pampering, Neglect, and Rejection. Pampering, neglect, and rejection are mistaken ways of rearing children (Dreikurs, 1948). ***Pampering*** refers to the parent's overprotection, oversolicitousness, and overindulgence. When such parental behavior interferes with the child's development of his/her own sense of competence and independence, it is a noxious influence. The ***neglected*** child does not receive from the parents enough guidance or confirmation. Neglect is often unintentional on the part of the parent, as when the parent talks much to the child but listens little, asks the child to perform at a higher level than the child is ready for, or does not recognize other needs of the child. The child feels ***rejected*** if the parent does not seem to care about the child's welfare, but especially when the parent is abusive and critical. A pampered child may retain positive self-esteem because his/her worth is confirmed by parental solicitousness. Neglected and rejected children do not feel so valued by their parents and must look elsewhere for a positive sense of self.

Questions which elicit information about this area include the following:

For Pampering

Would they still do things for you after you were old enough to do them by yourself?

Were they excessively fearful you would get hurt?

Did you sometimes feel they underestimated you?

Were you spoiled?

For Neglect

How did you feel about not being anybody's favorite?

Did you feel neglected or overlooked in any way?

Did you feel they didn't understand you?

For Rejection

How did you feel when they got angry at you? Punished you?

Did you ever feel you couldn't please them, no matter how hard you tried?

Did you feel they expected (demanded) too much from you?

Did you wish you had different parents?

Were you physically abused?

Until now we have discussed various kinds of interpersonal transactions as they were modeled in the family and only paid peripheral attention to them as they were experienced by the subject in his/her own interactions. In Chapter 2 we discussed various dimensions of parental interaction with the child (Table 2.1) and typical responses by the child (or typical interactions in which the child was engaged). Thus, if the parent is overindulgent, the child may expect such service from others as well. Those data which show us the effects of interpersonal transactions come from the spontaneous descriptions of family members, sibling ratings, and parent-child interactions. From these data we will infer what role each family member played in the overall constellation, which figures were seen as friends and which as adversaries, what behavior was reinforced by whom, how one viewed human relationships, what techniques were used for relating, and what was the effect on one's self-image.

Example 5.14. Family roles.

What was your brother like?

He was always in trouble. My mother had to go to school almost every week because he got into

> fights with the other children. I wasn't a goody-goody, but, by comparison, I was a well-behaved child.

Example 5.15. Friends (allies).

How did Mother relate to the children?

> She was always on our side. She protected us from father when he was angry at us. She was always there when we needed her.

Example 5.16. Adversaries.

Which children fought each other?

> My older sister always used to call me stupid. I decided to show her I wasn't stupid, and I became a good student. I was best in the class.

Examples 5.15 and 5.16 may present significant figures who lead to the subject's developing ***personifications*** (Sullivan, 1953). A personification is an internal image which endows whole classes of people with attributes possessed by one of the significant figures in the subject's past. For example, all older maternal women may been seen by the subject in Example 5.15 as protective and nurturing. In Example 5.16, women may be seen as critical and needing to be put in their place.

Example 5.17. The ***Gegenspieler*** (contrapuntal relationship)

While this German word literally means "opposing player," the ***Gegenspieler*** is not always an opponent. It is the person from whom the subject takes certain cues and with whom he/she has a competitive relationship. Such relationships can often be seen in the behavior of young children.

> Barry was four and Danny was two. When Barry wanted to play with the wagon, Danny would insist on playing with the wagon. Eventually,

> Barry would give Danny the wagon and would go to the kiddie car. When Danny noticed this, he would lose interest in the wagon and want the kiddie car. Barry was at first annoyed, but then discovered that he could keep Danny constantly frustrated by always finding something new to play with when he permitted Danny to persuade him to relinquish the toy of the moment.
>
> Danny had chosen Barry as his ***Gegenspieler***—the person from whom he took his cue. Barry responded by presenting Danny with a constantly changing set of cues. At one point Danny became tired of the whole thing and sat mournfully sucking his thumb. Barry then approached him and said, "Look Danny, I'm playing with the wagon. Don't you want it?"

In this competitive relationship, Barry and Danny are not necessarily adversaries, but they are ***Gegenspieler.*** They are busy watching each other in order to figure out what to do next.

Example 5.18. Reinforced behavior.

What would mother do when you hit your little sister?

> She used to tell me that I should protect her and not hit her and she'd punish me. I really felt my sister used to start it to get me in trouble. She'd get into my stuff and mess up my things, and when I complained, mother would say that I should be patient because she was too little to understand.

Such behavior on the part of mother reinforces the provocative behavior of the little sister as well as the older child's feeling of being unfairly treated.

Example 5.19. Reinforced behavior.

> My father always used to take me for walks with him. I loved it. My mother and sister would stay

> home because they thought it was too cold to take a walk. My father and I would bundle up and go out in the cold and walk. We had our best talks at that time and I would feel like I was his favorite.

Example 5.20. Success and failure experiences in various life areas.

Did you have any outstanding achievements?

> I was a good swimmer. I won medals. My parents used to come and watch me. I felt proud of it.

Who had the most friends?

> My brother did. Everyone liked him. I used to wish I was a popular as him, but I was shy. I had only one friend.

Who was the most responsible?

> I was the one who helped the most. My brother used to get out of doing things. He always had an excuse.

The subject in this case has had both success and failure experiences—the usual case. While successful as an athlete, in engaging in constructive behavior in the home and in pleasing the parents, the subject feels like a comparative failure in the area of peer friendships.

Example 5.21. Conclusions about human relationships.

What was the relationship like between the parents?

> They argued a lot. I think my father had a girl friend, and Mother would get very angry. When they argued, my father would leave the house and not come back for hours.

Did you take sides?

> All the kids took mother's side. We felt that father was being unfair. Sometimes mother would cry, and we'd feel terrible and try to be nice to her.

We can make an inference about the subject's outlook on human relationships from this material. The subject expresses a value which states that people should be "fair" to each other. Unfairness carries negative connotations. The proper way to treat a person is to "be nice," especially to a person who has suffered at the hands of others. Other possible inferences include the following: the female child is observing an undesirable model of husband-wife interaction and may conclude that a woman may suffer at the hands of a man; and a male child may conclude that males somehow do as they please, even if women are displeased, and if it's unfair, so what?

Since ER usually involve some type of human interaction, we may expect the ER of this subject to confirm at least one of the inferences we make in Example 5.21.

Example 5.22. Techniques for relating.

Sally*	Max	Warren
	-3	-6

Who tried to please the most?

> Max.

How?

> He was more willing to help when Mother asked him.

And you and Warren?

> Warren wasn't asked to help much. I did my share when I was asked. I didn't really try to please my mother, but I tried very hard to please Father. Warren just naturally pleased everybody. He was cheerful and cute.

Who used charm the most?

Warren. He was naturally charming.

The least?

Max didn't try to be charming. He was kind of gruff.

How about you?

I tried to be charming outside the house, but at home I wasn't.

Who was the most quarrelsome?

That was myself.

Who was most bossy?

I was.

Who complained the most?

I did.

These and similar questions permit us to make inferences about the techniques each child developed for relating to others. Max apparently used being helpful as a way of establishing a relationship, apparently to mother. Warren related by being cute and charming, while Sally was bossy, complained, used charm only outside the house, and tried to please Father. A few more questions will round out the picture.

Who was the best student? Best grades?

I was. I got the best grades.

What effect did that have on your position in the family?

My parents were proud of me. I used to help Max and Warren with their school work.

Who tried hardest to achieve?

> I did.

Who was the most concerned about right and wrong?

> I was.

Who was the most concerned about fair and unfair?

> That was I.

What did you complain about?

> Mostly about my brothers when they wouldn't listen to me.

Now we can see Sally's technique for relating within the family. She was the star student and the guardian of right and wrong, sitting in judgment on others. She expected a position of authority within the family as a consequence. She was the achiever and expected to be recognized as such.

Example 5.23. Prosocial and antisocial behavior.

What was Jack like?

> He was always in trouble. My father was always angry at him. He ditched school and ran away from home a few times. My parents always worried about him.

What was Mary like?

> She was the good one. Always responsible and always trying to help.

These descriptions do not necessary tell us how Jack and Mary will behave as adults. Jack may stop the rebellious behavior when he becomes an adult, and Mary may be a covert rebel. However, in childhood, Mary tried to be a cooperator while Jack seems to have been a defiant rebel who used noncooperation as a way of behaving. These childhood behaviors often occur only in specific contexts. The rest of the FC will tell us whether these behaviors were generalized to most situations or occurred only in particular circumstances.

Distinctions between prosocial and antisocial behavior play an important role in the Individual Psychologist's evaluation of personality to the extent that they correspond to what Adler called behavior "on the useful—versus the useless—side of life." Useless behavior is behavior which does not contribute to the general good. It is a consequence of faulty training and represents a feeling of "discouragement" about "one's chances in life." Dreikurs (1948), however, pointed out that antisocial and/or oppositional behavior in a child must be seen in context, and that this context includes not only discouragement but also the reinforcement practices of the adults. Thus, the child may misbehave to get attention rather than to express opposition, although, he adds, that personal power, revenge and the display of inadequacy are the other three common reasons for misbehavior.

Example 5.24. The effect on self-image.

We have already defined the ***self-image*** as that aspect of the self-concept which contains positive and negative self-evaluations. In this sense, it is identical with what is often called ***self-esteem.*** Self-image is inextricably associated with the person's movement toward the dominant goals of his/her life style—the guiding self-ideal. A defeat in the pursuit of the dominant goal is a threat to self-esteem—that is, to the self-image. We have already discussed the effect of pampering, neglect, and rejection on self-image.

While the best way of assessing self-image is usually through an analysis of the ER, much FC material gives clues to the self-image.

Example 5.24a.

What were you like as a child?

> Not much, I guess. My mother used to tell me my birth was an accident—that she hadn't wanted any more children.

Example 5.24b.

What role did you play with your group of friends? Were you a leader or follower or outsider or group "goat?"

> I wanted to be liked, so I tried to please everybody. I used to act like a clown so people would like me. I didn't tell them about myself because I thought they wouldn't like me if they got to know me.

Both of these examples indicate a negative self-image based upon feelings of unacceptability to others. The following example shows a positive self-image.

Example 5.24c.

> My sister was always making my mother angry. Mother was always being called to school for her misbehavior. I felt sorry for both of them. I didn't see any sense in my sister's bad behavior. I felt that I certainly wouldn't cause trouble. My mother had enough already.

Sometimes one finds that a person feels quite acceptable to others but also feels incompetent to perform tasks on his/her own or otherwise meet the challenges of life. An example can be seen in the following ER:

Example 5.25. Age 5

> My mother sent me to the store for a bottle of milk. On the way home the bag slipped out of my hand and the bottle broke. I ran home and told my mother. She was angry. I felt she shouldn't have asked such a small child to do the job.

Example 5.26. Differences between parent-child and child-child relationships.

Human relationships differ in different contexts. A mother may tell us that her child is a terror at home, while the teacher may report that the child is well-behaved in school. A child may oppose the mother but comply with the wishes of the father, who is seen as having greater status.

> **What were you like as a child?**
>
>> I was always outside. I never wanted to be home because my parents were always criticizing. I had a lot of friends and I always wanted to be with them. I usually didn't like adults.

The opposite also can be found.

> **Example 5.27.** Preference for adult companions.
>
> **Who had the most friends?**
>
>> I never had any friends my own age. I always felt different from them.
>
> **In what way?**
>
>> I was always more serious. Adults always liked me. When my father went hunting with his friends, they would take me along and I loved it, but the other kids were interested in baseball and I just wasn't. I can't even remember playing kid games. I always seemed old for my age.

Roles

As stated in Chapter 1, a ***role*** is an organized set of behaviors that belongs to an identifiable position in the social structure. In this case, the social structure is the family. Each role has a location, a set of expectations, a set of demands for enactment, and a set of role skills. In addition, self-role congruence becomes one of the determiners of self-image.

Several types of roles have already been discussed in the text—the "good child" and the "black sheep" are two examples. No single question elicits role, but it can usually be inferred from the information in the spontaneous self-description combined with the sibling ratings. The role of each family member can be so inferred.

Example 5.28. A family role.

From the information given in the sibling ratings of example 5.22., one discovers that the subject was the most responsible, the most achieving, the bossiest, and the most critical. She was also the one most concerned with right and wrong and was punished the most for talking back to the parents.

From this information we infer that the subject sat in judgment on the behavior of others and protested when they did not meet her standards for proper behavior. The authoritarian parents objected to Sally's own authoritarian attitude. Sally's family role can be described as the "guardian of the rules of right and wrong behavior" and the "moral judge of the family."

Where such a role is found, it is likely to be an imitation of parental behavior and a form of rebellion against parental authority.

A role may have power (it affects family transactions significantly) or not. A role also confers position in the hierarchy of the family. In addition, a role carries with it a positive or negative self-esteem evaluation, irrespective of its power and position in the hierarchy. Thus, the "black sheep" role usually has considerable power and may even confer dominance over other siblings, but the person enacting this role may well have very low self-esteem.

The Meaning of Life (Adler, 1958; Mosak & Dreikurs, 1967).

> A subject recalls that his father was an embittered and unhappy man who drank himself to death. One scene stood out in his memory, in which his father angrily stated, "When we are all gathered before God on Judgment Day, our family will be off in some corner behind the door and He won't even notice us." The subject's brother also abandoned himself to despair and became alcoholic. The subject however, concluded that, grim as the world may be, it was a mistake to give in to despair because it made others (e.g., Mother) so unhappy. He felt, "Unhappy I may be, but I must never make others unhappy." He was extremely mild-

mannered, never expressed anger, and always tried to please.

Conclusions about the nature and meaning of life are often drawn more easily from the ER than the FC because the current attitude to life may be different than it was in childhood, but the special section on this topic offers important clues to the subject's philosophy of life, i.e., does one have an optimistic or pessimistic stance toward the world? Is it essentially a friendly or inimical place? Is it orderly or unpredictable, meaningful or absurd? Does one hope or despair?

The meaning the subject assigns to life affects one's motivation toward action in the world. If the world is meaningless, then one may easily abandon oneself to hedonism or despair. If life has no rules, then one's own whims are the guidelines.

For the Individual Psychologist, social interest (Adler, 1964b) provides the most important context for meaning in life—the attachment to and interest in others. One finds the meaning of one's existence through commitment to the tasks of life in interaction with others.

Example 5.29. The meaning of life.

What was your favorite way of spending time?

> I always wanted to be playing with my friends. I hated to be alone. When my friends weren't around, I would make up games with imaginary companions. I always had to have something to keep my busy.

We can infer from this answer that subject finds a meaning to life in activity itself, especially activity together with others. However, the behavior described is common to many children in middle childhood, and we would seek confirmation of our inference by checking the ratings. If the subject was industrious and had many friends, we would feel more confident of our inference. If these traits are still prominent in adult life, our inference is probably correct.

One also may ask, "What would you like the epitaph on your tombstone to say? For what would you like to be remembered?" The answer may show us what meaning the person assigns to his/her own life.

Self-Concept

Some of the questions we have discussed earlier evoke self-concept. "How did you feel about yourself as a child?" "Did you like or dislike yourself?" "How would you have wanted to change yourself?" The answers tell us also how judgmental the person is about himself/herself. Self-concept is usually elicited easily from the self-description and ratings in questions 1 through 7 and the ratings in Chapter 4.

As we have seen, the process of interpretation of the FC so far has consisted of asking a series of questions, which gives us information about each of the content categories which we attempt to deduce. The answers to each of the questions often lead us to ask other questions which flesh out the picture we are constructing. From the beginning, we make inferences and, as we proceed, we are able to check and revise our inferences until we believe we have an accurate view of each content category. Since the interview format is used to collect the data, we can further check an inference by asking the subject if our guesses sound correct. The great majority of subjects will recognize when a guess is valid and will confirm or dispute the guess. Only a few defensive subjects will refuse to confirm a valid guess.

Essentially, what we wish to learn from the FC is how the subject responded to his/her early life situation and how these responses may have become elaborated into behavioral styles which became part of the personality and are still used in adult life. In order to help us do this, a useful procedure will be to have an instrument which will allow us to group the responses according to each content category and then hopefully to arrive at a global picture of the FC. In so doing we will hope that our content categories allow us to see what Keniston (1963) called the "press of history" on individual lives with its "subtle interweaving of themes" (1963, p. 60). However, the themes we find will show us how the subject construed his/her history as much or more than what the history actually was.

These construed themes are what we want to find. Sundberg (1977) reminded us of three general approaches to life history assessments: the search for themes, the search for etiology or early childhood "causes" of later events, and the search for predictors of behavior. Our system of classification will have some aspect of all three approaches but, for the understanding of personality, the themes are most important.

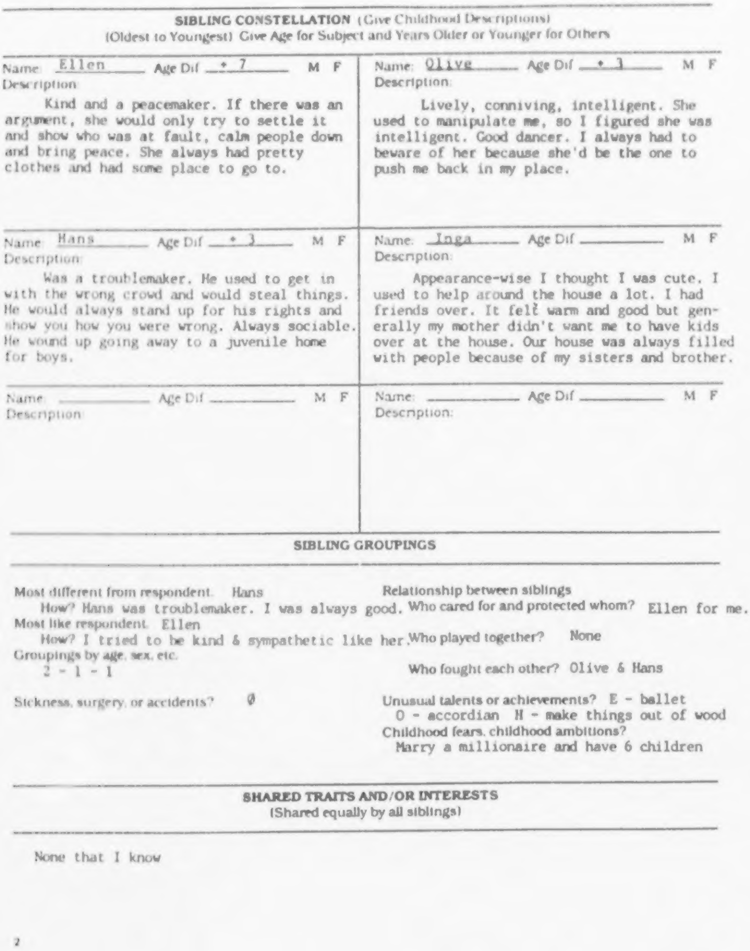
The system we will use will start with the "givens" of the family constellation: birth order, constitution and gender, models, parent caretaking behavior, sibling behavior, family values, family atmosphere, and ambient culture. These are the challenges which require a response, and the models. To each of these givens we will look for the response made by the child. The relationship between given and response should have both etiologic and predictive implications. The constellation of these responses should lead us to an understanding of the role selected by the child in response to the demands of the givens. Thus, our system will analyze ***responses.*** From this analysis we will perform a ***role analysis*** and a ***group process analysis.*** We will study the aim of the response and its role character, and study the group process characteristics of the response—how the response was carried out, how it was reinforced, and how it fit into the family ecology.

SUMMARIZING FAMILY CONSTELLATION

Table 5.4 is six pages of the LSI form with data collected for the FC inventory. We will use these data to show how interpretation is accomplished. Pages 4 and 5 of the LSI (Table 5.4) contain information about other aspects of early development than family constellation per se. These two pages describe some challenges of physical development, elementary school information, gender and sexual information, and social relationships. In these four areas, we look for information on how the subject responded to each challenge. Table 5.5 shows the ***givens*** we will use.

(Continued on page 159)

TABLE 5.4
The LSI Form
(Page 2)



SIBLING CONSTELLATION (Give Childhood Descriptions)
(Oldest to Youngest) Give Age for Subject and Years Older or Younger for Others

Name: Ellen Age Dif + 7 M F Description: Kind and a peacemaker. If there was an argument, she would only try to settle it and show who was at fault, calm people down and bring peace. She always had pretty clothes and had some place to go to.	Name: Olive Age Dif + 3 M F Description: Lively, conniving, intelligent. She used to manipulate me, so I figured she was intelligent. Good dancer. I always had to beware of her because she'd be the one to push me back in my place.
Name: Hans Age Dif + 3 M F Description: Was a troublemaker. He used to get in with the wrong crowd and would steal things. He would always stand up for his rights and show you how you were wrong. Always sociable. He wound up going away to a juvenile home for boys.	Name: Inga Age Dif ______ M F Description: Appearance-wise I thought I was cute. I used to help around the house a lot. I had friends over. It felt warm and good but generally my mother didn't want me to have kids over at the house. Our house was always filled with people because of my sisters and brother.
Name: ______ Age Dif ______ M F Description:	Name: ______ Age Dif ______ M F Description:

SIBLING GROUPINGS

Most different from respondent. Hans
How? Hans was troublemaker. I was always good.
Most like respondent. Ellen
How? I tried to be kind & sympathetic like her.
Groupings by age, sex, etc.
2 - 1 - 1

Sickness, surgery, or accidents? 0

Relationship between siblings
Who cared for and protected whom? Ellen for me.
Who played together? None
Who fought each other? Olive & Hans

Unusual talents or achievements? E - ballet
O - accordian H - make things out of wood
Childhood fears, childhood ambitions?
Marry a millionaire and have 6 children

SHARED TRAITS AND/OR INTERESTS
(Shared equally by all siblings)

None that I know

2

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TABLE 5.4 (Continued)
The LSI Form
(Page 3)

SIBLING RATINGS
(Rate from most to least)

Intelligence E - O - I - H
Elementary school grades I - . . . . - H
Helpful around house I - E - H - O
Industrious O - E - I - H
Standards of achievement I - . . . . - H
Actual achievement O - E - I - H
Daring H - I - O - E They used to call me daredevil
Assertive O - E - H - I
Patient E - . . . . - H
Methodical O - E - I - H
Neat E - O - I - H
Persistent E - O - I - H
Responsible E - O - I - H
Obedient I - . . . . - H
Mischievous H - O - I - E
Open rebel H - . . . . - E
Covert rebel O - . . . . - I
Punished H - O - I - E
For what? disobedience

By whom? Mother
Got away with the most O - H - E - I
Impulsive H - . . . . - E
Self-reliant O - E - I - H
Standards of right & wrong I - . . . . - H
Critical of others O - H - I - E
Critical of self I - . . . . - E
Easy-going E - . . . . - I
Sense of humor O - E - I - H
Excitable DK
Worried I - . . . . - E
Other:

Friends O - E - I - H
Charm O . . . I
Tried to please I - E - O - H
Had to please I . . . H
Succeeded in pleasing E - O - I - H
Outgoing H - O - E - I
Withdrawn I - . . . . - H
Cheerful O - I - E - H
Considerate E - O - I - H
Bossy E - O - I - H
Demanded way H - I - O - E
Got way H - . . . . - I
Temper O - . . . . - I
Fighter O - H - I - E
Chip on shoulder I . . . E
Sulked I . . . O
Held grudges I - . . . . - E
Complained H - I - O - E
Took advantage of others O - . . . . - I
Stubborn H - O - I - E
Shy I - . . . O
Sensitive and easily hurt I - . . . . - O
Excitement seeker H - O - I - E
Idealistic I - . . . . - H
Materialistic I - . . . . - E
Pampered DK
Masculine H - O - I - E
Feminine E - I - O - H ("Frilly clothes")
Sure of self O - E - H - I
Athletic O - H - I - E

TABLE 5.4 (Continued)
The LSI Form
(Page 4)

CHILDHOOD PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

(Health, Physique, Feelings about Body, Advantages/Disadvantages, Nicknames Associated with Physique)

Before grade school, I was chunky and had bangs. I had my hair curly and lost some weight when I started first grade. I was always tall for my age. I used to get kidded about my height. I had hurt feelings. was always strong and very active. I didn't like myself when I got in the upper grades --I didn't think I was attractive. Breast development at 12 years old.* I thought it was normal. Menstruated at 12 years. I felt I was a woman then. It was a good feeling. Always concerned about my weight. It seemed to go up at certain times for no good reason and then I'd have to diet.

* Some assessors place this information under Sexual Information.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INFORMATION

(Type of School, Grades, Subject Performance, Classroom Behavior, Relationship to Teachers, Subjects Liked and Disliked)

I went to a Catholic school and the nuns always liked me. I was well-behaved and was good in reading. I did well in school, but I talked a lot. That was my biggest problem. I always got marks in conduct for talking when I wasn't supposed to. Got along well with the kids. Reading was my favorite subject. The worst was history--so many facts to remember. Really had to apply myself in it in order to get through. Spelling was good. Math was good. Penmanship was good.

CHILDHOOD MEANINGS GIVEN TO LIFE

(Expectations, Ideals, Meaningful Goals, Favorite Daydreams, Religious Convictions)

I wanted to grow up and marry rich. I wanted people to like me. Not very religious. I thought people should try to get along well. I didn't see why people were mean to each other.

TABLE 5.4 (Continued)
The LSI Form
(Page 5)

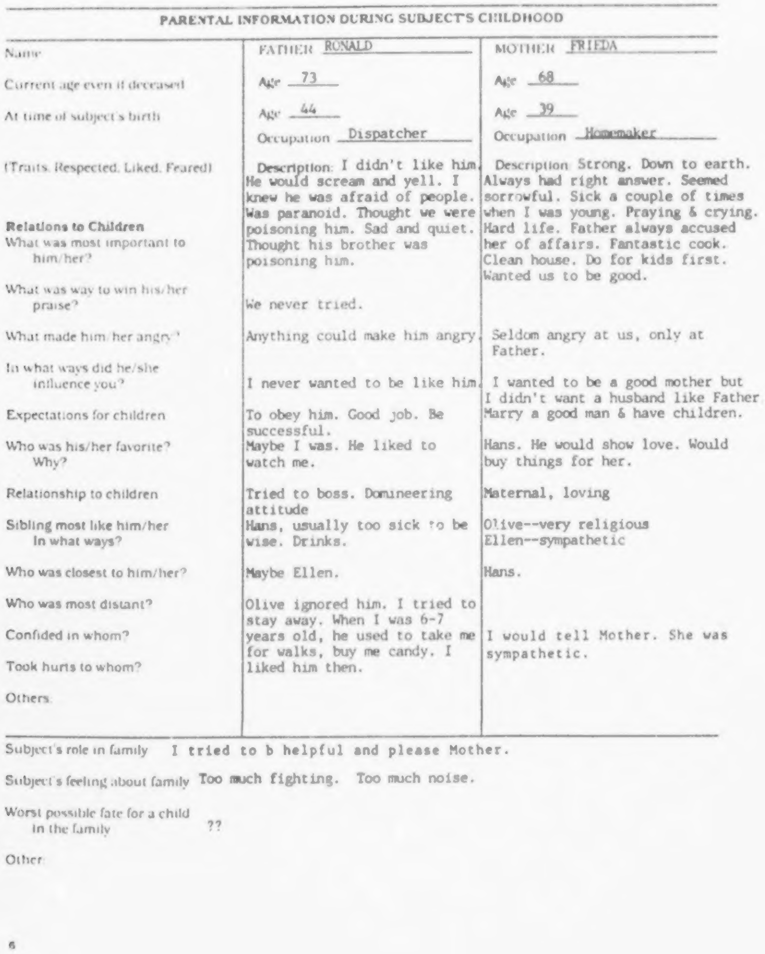
CHILDHOOD GENDER AND SEXUAL INFORMATION
(Development, Source of Information, Sex Play, Reaction to Pubertal Changes, Comfort with Gender, Feelings About Sexual Activity, Sexual Abuse)

I always liked being a girl. I think I noticed the difference between boys and girls around 4 or 5 years old. I was a tomboy--played with dolls, dress-up and planned on getting married, etc., but was considered a tomboy because I played on the monkey bars and swung upside down and did daring things for a girl. My girlfriends told me about intercourse when I was 10 years old. No problems with sex. I feel I don't have any sexual problems.

CHILDHOOD SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS
(Friends, Gangs, Availability of Peers, Role in Peer Group, Relations with Adults)

Had friends in the neighborhood. We had a club and I was the vice president. In school I had friends. I had a boyfriend from second to fourth grade. All the kids were having boy friends and girl friends at that time. Had a couple of girls who lived down the block that I was close with. I had one good close friend throughout school and even now. (In her group, she felt like she was more of a leader than a follower.)

TABLE 5.4 (Continued)
The LSI Form
(Page 6)



PARENTAL INFORMATION DURING SUBJECT'S CHILDHOOD

Name	FATHER RONALD	MOTHER FRIEDA
Current age even if deceased	Age 73	Age 68
At time of subject's birth	Age 44 Occupation Dispatcher	Age 39 Occupation Homemaker
(Traits. Respected. Liked. Feared)	Description: I didn't like him. He would scream and yell. I knew he was afraid of people. Was paranoid. Thought we were poisoning him. Sad and quiet. Thought his brother was poisoning him.	Description: Strong. Down to earth. Always had right answer. Seemed sorrowful. Sick a couple of times when I was young. Praying & crying. Hard life. Father always accused her of affairs. Fantastic cook. Clean house. Do for kids first. Wanted us to be good.
Relations to Children		
What was most important to him/her?		
What was way to win his/her praise?	We never tried.	
What made him/her angry?	Anything could make him angry.	Seldom angry at us, only at Father.
In what ways did he/she influence you?	I never wanted to be like him.	I wanted to be a good mother but I didn't want a husband like Father
Expectations for children	To obey him. Good job. Be successful.	Marry a good man & have children.
Who was his/her favorite? Why?	Maybe I was. He liked to watch me.	Hans. He would show love. Would buy things for her.
Relationship to children	Tried to boss. Domineering attitude	Maternal, loving
Sibling most like him/her In what ways?	Hans, usually too sick to be wise. Drinks.	Olive--very religious Ellen--sympathetic
Who was closest to him/her?	Maybe Ellen.	Hans.
Who was most distant?	Olive ignored him. I tried to stay away. When I was 6-7 years old, he used to take me for walks, buy me candy. I liked him then.	
Confided in whom?		I would tell Mother. She was sympathetic.
Took hurts to whom?		
Others:		

Subject's role in family I tried to b helpful and please Mother.

Subject's feeling about family Too much fighting. Too much noise.

Worst possible fate for a child in the family ??

Other:

6

TABLE 5.4 (Continued)
The LSI Form
(Page 7)

NATURE OF PARENTS' RELATIONSHIP

(Description, Division of Roles, Interpersonal Relationship, Conflicts/Agreements, Marriage Happy/Unhappy)

A dead marriage. My father was always screaming and having an argument and my mother was always trying to calm things down. They separated a few times. Father thought Mother was poisoning his food and would take off and live with his friend for a couple of weeks. They disagreed about child-raising. (Fought openly in front of kids, accusing Mother of promiscuity with brother and both trying to do away with him. Argued about finances. One of the older kids would step in and stop Father from becoming violent. Father would transfer anger from Mother to one of the kids. No resolution, fights would just end and things would calm down till the next time. Inga felt depressed when parents fought.) I used to cry a lot. I felt rejected because, when they were fighting, I felt they shouldn't have had children and I shouldn't have been born. Took Mother's side.

OTHER FAMILY INFORMATION

(Family Climate, Family Values, Socio-economic Status, Ethnicity, Religion)

I don't think I expressed it as a child; I just felt it. The other kids would make a farce of the way Father behaved, so I knew it was in his mind, (accusations) not real. Father was Catholic; children went to Catholic schools. Economic Situation: Both parents worked. Always had jobs. No children went to college. Family Values: Both parents wanted their children to be successful; both valued good grades in school.

ADDITIONAL PARENTAL FIGURES AND ADULT MODELS

Who/Relationship: Mike (Father's brother)	Who/Relationship:
He was a kindly man. Always good to us. We lived with him when we came to the U.S. and always lived close to them, always felt his family was better than us--more love and more refinement than our family. I knew the accusations were baloney. I might have liked him more because of it. Because he was the underdog (innocent).	

TABLE 5.5
Given Content Categories of the FC

Birth Order	Parental caretaking behavior
Gender	Sibling behaviors and interaction
Constitution	Family values
Models	Family atmosphere
	Ambient culture

When we examine the responses, we will note the social role implications and ***group process*** implications of these responses. That is, each response will, in some way, fit into the eventual social role one tries to play. One can also say that the aim of the response functions as a guiding line for the method of behavior used in the response.

The group process implications point to the continuing interaction between family members and the status and security issues involved. The "process" is how each person acts, reacts, and interacts with the others. Alliances and rivalries, dominance behaviors and territorial behaviors are part of the group process.

We will examine each given in Inga's case and the responses she made.

Category 1. Birth Order

The subject is the youngest with three older siblings who serve as models. No evidence is in the data that she overran any older sibling. All the information suggests that she was an active participant in the family and did not play a dependent role. Nevertheless, she experienced herself as the youngest who had a place among her peers (see Childhood Social Relationships, Table 5.4, p. 5) but in danger of being "pushed back in her place" by the older siblings. She views herself as useful but subordinate.

Her main response to the demand of her birth order is to accept a role as youngest child and develop behaviors which allow her a significant place in the family structure. Her self-description and the trait ratings suggest that she played a compliant and useful role at home and in school. Apparently, only with her peers was she more assertive (a daring tomboy and vice president of the social club). The aim of these adaptive responses are understood by us as attempts to achieve a significant position in the social hierarchy—a basic human striving. The particular behaviors used to achieve this aim are of interest to us; she tries to be someone who counts through being helpful, not being troublesome and pleasing the caretakers, other authorities and her peers. In short, she tries to win favor by pleasing others. Such behavior can be considered a social role and, in this family, was one of the acceptable roles available to females.

We may summarize this category as follows:

Birth Order and Response

YOUNGEST OF FOUR	Two older sisters serve as models, brother serves as negative model. She plays role of a younger child and carves out her own territory
AIM	To achieve a significant position among others.
METHOD	Compliant and pleasing behavior to win favor
SOCIAL ROLE IMPLICATIONS	This is a common role for a youngest girl, especially following on the heels of a misbehaving brother (her territory).

GROUP PROCESS IMPLICATIONS	Mother and Ellen reinforced independent behavior. There is little specific information, but we speculate that Inga's behavior received positive reinforcement and fit in the family values.

As we continue to summarize the categories, we will expect them to dovetail and provide converging information.

Category 2. Gender

Sufficient data are in the inventory to show that the subject enjoyed being feminine and set a premium on feminine behavior and attractiveness. She described that others called her a tomboy because she was daring, but she does not perceive her daring behavior as non-feminine. The female models in the family are all depicted as strong, and her goal is to be a successful adult female. However, females are dependent on males ("marry a millionaire").

Gender and Response

FEMALE	Experience congruence with female role. Views females as strong, helpful, and independent. Females are not devalued.
AIM	To be a "successful" adult female.
SOCIAL ROLE IMPLICATIONS	The role demands and enactments are clearly enjoyed by her. The sexual aspects are "no problem."
GROUP PROCESS IMPLICATIONS	Inga imitates the other female models, especially Ellen, who has high status. Inga accepts the family value for feminine behavior, and acts it out.

Category 3. Constitution

This category is significant in only some subjects but can be so significant that it cannot readily be omitted. In Inga's case, several constitutional issues are mentioned: she reports she was tall for her age and sensitive to teasing about it, was concerned about her weight, and felt unattractive. However, she reported these factors as past issues and seems to have negotiated these discouragements successfully. While she felt unattractive because of her height, after puberty she felt like a "woman." In effect, her response to this given was to have a positive self-image, to see more good than bad in herself.

Category 4. Models

The most significant childhood models are parents and older siblings. Other significant figures sometimes play an important role at this stage, perhaps a teacher or other family member. For this subject we can include the uncle as a model. We will describe each model separately.

Models and Responses

MODEL		
FATHER	Tyrannical and paranoid behavior.	Disliked and pitied him. Father is a negative model who is not imitated by the subject. His behavior has low value. Note that father and mother are quite old compared to the subject, a situation which often creates distance between parent and child.
MOTHER	A strong but sorrowful figure who also models domestic excellence.	Inga does not classify herself as imitating mother, but there is some reason to suspect that she valued mother's domestic skills. Mother is also an object of pity and Inga obviously does not desire Mother's lot. How-

		ever. Inga reports that she also suffered (Table 5.4, p. 2), again imitating mother.
ELLEN	The family peacemaker and model of successful femininity. Ellen is also a strong figure.	Examination of the trait ratings (Table 5.4, p. 2) shows that, while Inga puts herself in the middle on most ratings, she rates herself as being more like Ellen than anyone else in the family. She is like her in femininity, compliance, pleasing others, and responsible behavior. However, she rates herself as different from Ellen in being self-critical, more sensitive, and quick to take offense. The ratings suggest that Inga used techniques of passive rebellion and sensitivity to protest her situation. Such behavior did not violate her compliant role. Most likely, she does not feel as successful as Ellen. Note that Inga does not recognize rebellion in herself ("I don't think I rebelled.") and probably did not perceive her sensitivity, sulking, and complaining as covert rebellion.

Inga thus tried to imitate Ellen's femininity and pleasing behavior but did not achieve her first-born aplomb or effectiveness. Her techniques for protesting were those used frequently by a youngest child.

OLIVE	Another strong female who uses less honorable techniques to assert her power. Olive fights openly, while Inga uses more covert techniques.	The weight of these data suggests that Inga does not select Olive as a model to imitate, but she admires Olive's social status.
HANS	A troublemaker.	Neither of the family males is a model to imitate. Perhaps Inga would have liked to have had Hans' courage, but his disruptive behavior presents a negative model.
UNCLE	A kind man who is an innocent victim of Father's accusations. A higher status male.	Inga likes and also pities him, but, while he presented certain ideal male characteristics, she does not seem to imitate him in any way.

SOCIAL ROLE IMPLICATIONS

From a perusal of the behavior Inga imitated and that which she did not, we obtain more information about the social role she assumed. Now we can see that she was not only a pleaser but also sensitive, someone who "suffered in silence" and used techniques of weakness (suffering and sulking) to register her protests against her relative inability to assert herself. She presents herself as being more like her mother than she seems to realize.

GROUP PROCESS IMPLICATIONS

Inga describes herself as someone who tried to get her way but did not succeed. Perhaps she sees herself as the least powerful in the family. We also may detect an underlying sense of unfairness. We also can speculate from data so far analyzed that sensitivity and suffering did not have as much power to influence others as did open assertion. Why did she continue to use this behavior? Perhaps being the youngest, she could find no success in open assertion. At any rate, the use of such behaviors is usually associated with the underdog role in human relationships.

As we examine the models, we see some clear distinctions along gender lines. None of the men are described as both strong and having high status. Even the uncle is only kind and good. All the women are presented as more adequate than the men. Perhaps a key statement which shows this on p. 4 of Table 5.4: "He acted the boss, but mother really ran the house."

Category 5. Parental Caretaking Behavior

		Response
FATHER	"He used to take me for walks, buy me candy."	"I liked him then."
	"He ruled over us all."	Disapproved and rejected his authority.
MOTHER	"Maternal," "fantastic cook," "kids came first."	Admired as a model. Felt sorry for her. Wants to be like her and suffers like her.
SOCIAL ROLE IMPLICATIONS	Inga did not seem able to play the strong persons as much as mother, but she seems to have imitated mother in pre-	

ferring reason over physical force, wanting to help others and in showing her rebellion by sensitivity and hurt feelings, as we have already decided.

GROUP PROCESS IMPLICATIONS

Inga probably concluded that, if things were to be straightened out, women would have to do so, but one stronger than she. Perhaps one day she can become the adequate adult female who can bring harmony and peace to others.

Category 6. Sibling Behaviors and Interactions

The interaction of the siblings with the subject is our concern here, not the siblings as models. For example, Ellen and Olive treated Inga in different ways. Ellen was an ally, Olive a rival. Hans seemed to have argued with everyone. Olive became an example of a person against whom she felt unable to assert herself. Her response was to feel hurt (suffer). One might conclude that Inga perceived people stronger than her as being either friendly or inimical, and that she could do very little about it.

Being the youngest, Inga felt less powerful within the family than she did with her peers, where she could see herself as a leader, liked and admired by others.

Other aspects of parental caretaking behavior and sibling interactions also will be seen in our discussion of family values and atmosphere.

Category 7. Family Values

The data from which family values are elicited come from the description of the behavior of the family caretakers and authorities, in this case, the parents and older siblings. Information will also come from the ratings and other parts of the collected material.

Caretakers provide guidelines (models) and feedback (reinforcement). We will examine Inga's case by looking at four aspects of caretaker behavior: what they (1) demand or expect; (2) honor (value) and how; (3) reject and punish and how they punish; and (4) permit or overlook and when. (See Table 5.6.) If the child considers some of these demands illegitimate or inappropriate, then the child will feel less obliged to meet these demands or use them to reinforce a feeling of unfairness.

If we look at the older siblings, we can see that Ellen's behavior and values seemed like those of mother, but Olive, like father, demanded that Inga play a subordinate role, and

TABLE 5.6
Parental Behavior Dimensions and Inga's Responses

Father	**Inga's Response**
Demanded: Submission	Views the demand as illegitimate but afraid to oppose openly.
Valued: material success	Accepted the value.
Rejected: (not known)	
Permitted: (not known)	
Mother	**Inga's Response**
Demanded: (not known)	
Valued: cordial relationships, helpfulness	Accepted and imitated. Helped mother in order to win her approval.
Rejected: (not known)	
Permitted: independent behavior	Independent behavior with peers. At home, she uses sensitivity and silent protest.

punished her by "putting her in her place." Neither Olive nor Hans were caretakers in the sense we are using the words.

Category 8. Family Atmosphere

We have previously said that family atmosphere can be divided into the subcategories of mood, order, and relationship (Table 2.1). In Inga's family, the family mood seems to have been excitable and unhappy because of father's explosive and dictatorial behavior. Father is described as always screaming and arguing, while Mother and the older children were always trying to calm him down. The family order seems to have been in a state of flux—Mother and Ellen tried to establish a peaceful and logical order, while Father destroyed this order with attempts to impose his own authority. Inga clearly chose Mother's side and favored ethical standards as a basis for order.

The family relationships were more complex. They were a mixture of cooperation and competition, accusing and pitying, conflictual and lacking in harmonious intimacy. Mother is described as putting the children first, but this is more a tribute to her dutiful behavior than to her warmth. The child-rearing methods were a subject of conflict between the parents.

TABLE 5.7
Family Atmosphere and Inga's Response

MOOD		
	excitable unhappy explosive	pities others and self; tries to avoid upsetting others
ORDER		
	conflict between arbitrary and ethical consistency and logic	rejects arbitrary authority; tries to be helpful
RELATIONSHIPS		
	conflictual	sides with peacemakers but pities both sides.

Table 5.7 listed several important attitude polarities which are influenced by family atmosphere and parental behaviors. We have data to suggest that certain attitudes included in that list were reinforced in Inga. These were self-reliance, cooperation, and activity. However, the data also suggest that a positive self-concept came more from her relationship with her peers than with family members.

Were we now to determine social role and group process implications, we would find that our conclusions from the data are beginning to repeat themselves. The subject's social role becomes more clearly that of a youngest girl in a conflicted family situation, rejecting arbitrary and disturbing behavior and trying to judge herself and others by ethical standards. Conflict is threatening to her and cordiality is reassuring. Her main method of interpersonal operation is to try to please and she often does not feel pleasing enough.

The group process centers around the "sick" father who makes trouble and his conflict with the long-suffering mother. Inga is a spectator of this drama, which overshadows everything else in the family. Family members are seen as victims of Father's sick behavior and as struggling successfully or otherwise to free themselves from Father's power to intimidate. The two great divisions in the family are between Father and Mother (with all the siblings on her side) and between male and female, with specific behaviors modeled by each gender.

The Response Categories

The three response categories, sibling territories, social role, and meaning of life, remain to be evaluated.

Sibling Territories. By plotting the territory of each sibling, we will be able to delineate the areas of success/encouragement and failure/discouragement for each sibling and further round out our picture of the FC. The information on pp. 2 through 5 of Table 5.4 is the most valuable for this purpose. Eleven territorial areas were listed in Table 5.1, and we shall use these for our tabulation in Table 5.8.

TABLE 5.8
Sibling Territories

	Ellen	**Olive**	**Hans**	**Inga**
ACADEMIC	most intelligent	intelligent		best grades
HELPFULNESS	responsible, peacemaker			responsible, helpful to mother
AMBITIOUS STRIVING				highest standard of achievement
METHOD OF ACTIVITY	easy-going methodical	industrious charm sociable outgoing	daring sought excitement troublemaker	industrious daring (sought) excitement pleasing considerate easily hurt methodical
COMPLIANCE/ OPPOSITION		covert rebel	mischief open rebel	most obedient sulked
SOCIABILITY	considerate pleasing	cheerful		cheerful shy
PERSONAL	bossy Father's favorite	retained dominance over Inga temper fighter critical of others	demanded and got his way stubborn Mother's favorite	used techniques of youngest (sensitive, sulked)
DEPENDENCE/ INDEPENDENCE	(all siblings were socialized to be independent)			
MORALITY/ ETHICAL STANDARDS				high moral standards self-critical idealistic
CONTROL/ ACCOMODATION		(no clear distinction in this area)		
GENDER ROLE	successful female	prettiest	only male	feminine

On page 2 of Table 5.4, Hans is described as always sociable. On page 2 he is rated as having the least friends and being the most withdrawn, although the most outgoing. This discrepancy remains unclarified in the data and is an example of the need for careful questioning to ascertain what the subject means. The word sociable may mean a friendly attitude, extraverted behavior, or popularity with others. When uncertain, we must clarify by asking further questions.

Data from Table 5.8 confirm our previous speculations. Ellen's areas of success are in academics, in being helpful, in cordial relationships, in being Father's favorite, and in femininity. Olive seemed to maintain her own place by being successfully social in a more assertive way. Hans played the role of rebel and Mother's favorite. Inga's territories were compliant behavior, high moral standards, pleasing others, and the use of sensitivity, sulking, and silent suffering to register her protests.

Each sibling thus had a territory in which to strive. Hans, the only boy, selected a territory in which he had no opposition from any of the girls. He is like Father in his non-cooperative behavior and in being a troublemaker. In this family, troublemaking may have been an expectation for males. Olive seems much more out for herself than her two sisters. Ellen and Inga were "good girls," and Olive shows some of the characteristics of a middle girl squeezed between two good girls and trying to make elbow room for herself by her temper and criticism. Inga's territory is that of a youngest who tries to please and fit in but feels unable to be as assertive as others, and she sees herself as being subordinate in status.

Social Role. The second of our response categories is social role, the way in which the subject actually tried to fit into the family and the larger world. Inga's social role in family is in Table 5.9 and social role with peers is in Table 5.10. This category will predict for us the similar behaviors we expect to find in the subject's adult life. It will further describe for us the methods selected by the subject to cope with the early challenges of life.

The tabulation of social role is an additional use of the data which fits smoothly with the other interpretations we have made. From our general knowledge we would expect that Inga's roles would easily fit into the family and peer ecologies in the great majority of group situations. Her behavior is not

TABLE 5.9
Inga's Social Role in the Family

Location	Youngest child, a girl, and a pleaser.
Expectations	If she helps and does not make trouble, she will please others and be accepted by them.
Enactment	By considerate and helpful behavior. By ethical standards and compassion.
Role Skills	While, objectively, relatively successful in pleasing, she is not sure of her success in this role. She does not obtain all she wants. Mother will still not let her have friends in the house as much as she would like.
Self-role Congruence	No incongruence exists between her self-perception and the role. Her enactment of the role does not impair her self-esteem. However, she hopes for a higher status in the future when she is a successful adult female.

TABLE 5.10
Inga's Social Role With Peers

Location	A tall and physically adept girl who actively seeks friends.
Expectations	If she is outgoing and pleasing, she will have status with peers.
Enactment	By friendly and even physically daring behavior.
Role Skills	Effective in having both boy friends and girl friends. Had status among peers.
Self-role Congruence	Outside of a few concerns about her height and weight, Inga feels quite comfortable in her feminine role—with both sexes.

threatening to dominants or peers, except to Olive, who wants to protect her own territory. If we consider four group process issues—the roles available in the family and with peers, reinforcements offered for these roles, models available, and the fit of the role with family and cultural values—we can see that Inga's social roles should be effective. Let us briefly discuss the four issues in regard to the family ecology:

1. **Roles available in the family.** For an ambitious youngest girl to achieve status in this family, she would have to display either some unusual and outstanding success or be compliant and pleasing, since the role of troublemaker was already conspicuously pre-empted by Hans, and no female was modeling such a role. Being the youngest, she could not successfully be a bossy dominant, nor could she assert herself openly against the older siblings, all of whom were assertive.

2. **Reinforcements offered for the role.** Compliance and helpfulness usually elicit positive reinforcement. Note that self-assertion against others provided no rewards for Inga in the family; neither did open complaining. We do not know how her sulking and sensitivity were reinforced, but she presents herself as "suffering in silence." Her only reward for this seems to have been in its confirmation of her own weakness in coping with the dominant others by open self-assertion.

3. **Models available.** In this family, male and female models are clearly distinct in behavior and function. Females are rational and have to struggle with the troublemaking behavior of males. While males can dominate for short periods, females are actually more functionally effective and are the more enduring powers (Father becomes a piteous figure and Hans goes to reform school). Inga does not imitate any of the male models; she imitates Mother and Ellen. Her reaction to the male models is to behave the opposite way, i.e., not to make trouble.

4. **Role congruence with family and cultural values.** From the female models, Inga selected a role which fit in with the power structure of the family. Her role seemingly

violated none of the family values and led her to no significant conflict with family members. In this family of Central European background, the father tried to play the role of authority but actually failed at it.

The Meaning of Life. In their efforts to cope with the demands and challenges of existence, humans ascribe various meanings to "life." They try to understand what is important, good, true. They look for guidelines to orient themselves.

The meaning given to life is a set of conclusions one draws from the ***Weltbild*** and thus a group of internal constructs. Usually to elicit these constructs from the ER is easier than the FC inventory, but often the material in the LSI will reveal to us the meaning a particular human has ascribed to "life."

In Chapter 1, we discussed how the life style contains conclusions about life and oneself in the world (Table 1.1). We discussed there various distorted attitudes or meanings that can be ascribed to life. Life can be seen as a Garden of Eden or a vale of tears. It can be seen as a creation of God or as a mindless combination of molecules with no meaning. It can be a battleground between forces of good and evil, a place to work out salvation or the brief flicker of a candle in a long dark night.

The meaning ascribed to life functions as a guiding construct, and the person, who holds the meaning, mobilizes behavior in the context of that meaning. As we perceive, so we select our responses.

If we examine Inga's inventory, we can find material which points to a meaning for life. For Inga, life is a problem in human relationships. People have the power to be helpful and please each other or to be cruel and make each other unhappy. Life is a conflict between reason/harmony/kindness and unreason/disorder/hostility in which people often become victims. She and Mother are victims of Father's irrational behavior, while Father himself is the piteous victim of his own paranoia. Life is, at its base, a tragedy.

Obviously, the interpretation of the FC requires that the examiner have the skill to recognize the pertinent issues and put the interpretation into suitable language. All of the tables in the chapter are intended to be guiding lines toward interpretation, but the final interpretation is a creative formulation of the examiner. As yet no reliability studies have shown how much uniformity exists among different interpreters of the FC, however one piece of strongly suggestive evidence is that class after class of students have learned to interpret FC to the satisfaction of the instructors. Apparently, students understood what to look for and how to describe their findings in commonly understood language.

A final formulation of the FC would include a descriptive statement from each of the categories, and this formulation could start with any one category and finish with any other. The following formulation (Table 5.11) of Inga's FC is by one examiner, in his own words. As we follow it, we can see how it touches on one category after another in order to form an understandable description of the FC in one complete statement. The remarks in brackets are inserted in order to show the category involved.

TABLE 5.11
FC Formulation Summary of Inga

Inga is the youngest of four, in some ways the youngest of three girls and in some ways a girl following an older brother [***birth order***]. Each in the family was ambitious in his or her own way [***family value***]. The adult models were an authoritarian, "sick" father who bossed but was obviously wrong and a mother who was right and competent but was intimidated by father [***parental models***]. Father's intimidation affected the whole family [***family atmosphere***]. The oldest girl imitated Mother's interest in peace and feminine pursuits. The other girl and only boy were more rebellious and out for themselves [***birth order and gender response***]. Inga compared herself in looks, social skills, and talents and felt inferior [***sibling territories***]. She found a place through compliance [***sibling territories***] and hoped that if she were pleasing enough and achieved enough [***social role***], everything would turn out well for her. However, no matter what she did, she didn't fulfill her high ambition [***meaning of life***].

Important family issues were who would have whose way and war versus peace [***family values and family atmosphere***]. The conflict seemed to spoil everything, so an atmosphere of unhappiness and wrongness existed in the family [***family atmosphere***].

Inga fought back by feeling angry and hurt and suffering silently, feeling like a righteous and suffering victim [***meaning of life***].

Note that this summary could be more complete and every reader could add more information to it. However, this example (Table 5.11) is enough to show how such a summary can be constructed.

THE PREDICTIVE VALUE OF THE FC

The relationship between childhood behavior and the family situation is easy to see from the data. But what can we predict about her current behavior? We can guess at a number of things.

Birth Order Effects

Having been a youngest who was ambitious but felt lacking, we can guess that Inga may continue in adult life to feel that all her efforts will not be good enough to allow her to attain her goals.

Constitution and Gender Effects

She may be happy in female roles but will never be sure enough of her attractiveness as a female nor of her homemaking skills.

Interpersonal Relations

She may be sensitive to any slight to her position. She may accept subordinate roles and not feel appreciated enough. She may strive for cooperation and harmony and feel unable to cope with conflict and disagreement. She may feel that others "make trouble" for her. She may try to please and hope to be liked but may not be sure how to please. Nevertheless, she will always try to make friends.

Mood

When life goes smoothly, Inga will be hopeful and compliant. But in conflict situations, where she is not successful in pleasing, she may become discouraged, especially when the conflict is with an authority. The use of "silent suffering" and sulking suggests that she may be subject to episodes of depression.

Social Role Effects

If her active compliance does not work, her undercover resentment may come to the fore. If so, she may become increasingly discouraged and suffer in silence, stopping her active efforts to please and becoming a silent accuser.

One can, of course, start with the FC as the only known data and predict the adult situation. In this case, one prediction we can make is that, for Inga, conflict with authority would be a critical situation for her. She has no effective way of coping with it. We can then examine the future course of her life to see if our prediction is valid; in this case, it is. Inga suffered a depression as a consequence of an argument with an employer. His criticism of her work enraged her, but she felt unable to do anything about it, took to her bed with a mixture of anger and depression, obsessive thoughts of suicide and angry thoughts of attacking him.

A REVIEW OF THE PROCESS

What have we done to interpret the data in the FC? First, we have listened carefully to the language which the subject has used. We have listened to descriptor terms—the adjectives and adverbs used—and to the comparisons made. By eliciting spontaneous descriptions, we have heard what areas are stressed by the subject and what emotional responses she expressed. In essence, by eliciting descriptors, we have tried to see how the subject construes life and people.

Second, we have looked for match-ups, such as the correlation between childhood behavior and the parental model of such behavior, complementary relationships, trait clusters which give us patterns of behavior, territorial trade-offs, and other matches which allow us to fit these data which must be explained because sometimes the incongruity is the missing piece which, when explained, gives us the key which allows us to see the pattern of the ***Gestalt,*** the whole picture.

In all this, we have transplanted descriptors, such as trait ratings, into movement terms. Our final description will be a description of planned adaptive behavior in a specific psychological situation—a way of meeting the tasks of life.

During this process we have constantly plotted data against theory. We began with a theory of the FC and we have expected these data to fit this theory. Our theory has been, we hope, broad enough that those data we recovered fell into the theory's domain.

Eventually, the interpretation of data according to the theory gives a set of psychodynamics which has the power to explain etiology and predict current and future behavior.

The different tables we have used have comfortably fit our theory so that, if the theory is valid, each table will likely be valid also. But we have also suggested that some consensual validity of the interpretations come from the subject's agreement with them—from the subject's verbal, facial, and postural expressions of agreement. Also the tabulation of the categories has tended to produce the same conclusions from different scales. This means that we have looked at the information from several different angles permitted by the theory and we have, by and large, come to the same conclusions each time.

CHAPTER 6

INTERPRETING EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

PERTINENT ISSUES IN INTERPRETING EARLY RECOLLECTIONS (ER)

When No ER Are Recalled

In rare cases, the subject will report that he/she recalls no ER. Sometimes this is the result of faulty interviewing techniques; the interviewer may have given unclear instructions or lacked the training to elicit ER by appropriate questions. Sometimes a suspicious subject will refuse to give ER because of not trusting the interviewer. In some of these cases, primed ER can still be obtained, but often these are curiously unsatisfactory. When ER are not forthcoming, it is as if the selective effect of memory does not include early life experiences and these subjects have no ready store of memories for easy recall. When such subjects are patients in psychotherapy, one may expect that they eventually will begin to report ER which are of the same quality one obtains from the majority of subjects.

Length of Time the ER Has Been Remembered

The subject commonly will report of an ER, "I've always remembered this." These ER are familiar to the subject and are most trustworthy in supplying information about the personality. According to the theory, they should reveal the most consistent elements in the personality. However, if a subject in psychotherapy were to say, "Here's one I haven't thought of in a long time," this ER should be considered a possible indicator of an incipient change in personality. When subjects begin to delve into their own memories, open themselves to the contents of these memories, and recall one which had once been familiar, they are reestablishing a conscious link between every day self-awareness and past experiences.

One must take into account that such ER may be no more than an additional confirmation of what the familiar ER already say. The reestablished link may only provide the same information about the meaning of life as before. Somewhat different are ER which are reported with the statement, "I didn't remember this before." These are still more likely to be indicators of a change in the memory organization and thus, in the perceptual organization of the subject.

Changes in ER

Plewa (1935) has warned that changes in the details of ER, reappearance of long forgotten ER, forgetting of previously given ER, or appearance of new ER may all be responses to the momentary attitude of the subject. If this is so, any change in ER may be a contamination by current events rather than a change in personality. However, ER often do change in the course of psychotherapy and this change seems to be in line with actual changes in the subject's outlook on life (Dreikurs, 1954; Mosak, 1958; Eckstein, 1976). Kadis (1957) has described this as part of the process of growth during psychotherapy, in which changing perceptions of the world are supported by corresponding changes in recall. Brodsky (1952) made a similar claim.

Still unclear is the issue of when a change is a significant indicator of personality change, when it is only indicative of a change in current mood (as when a depression lifts), or when it is contaminated by current life events (as when one has to make a job change). One young woman had recently acquired a new lover who admired her back. She gave a whole new group of ER in which her back was prominently featured. However, contaminants, according to our theory, should only affect contents, not the core constructs which point to the life style.

In order for us to consider the changed ER an indicator of personality change, they must show change in the basic aspects of personality structure, in the life style: that is, a change in the self-concept, the world view, the self-ideal, or dominant goal and in the major ***modus operandi*** used by the subject.

An example of such a change can be seen in the ER of a woman in the late twenties. The first set is as follows:

> Age 4—A girl cousin, a year older, came to visit. Mother brought out a big galvanized tub so we could play in it. I was thrilled. Mother turned the hose on and we played in our bathing suits. Pretty soon my cousin got bored and walked away. I also walked away. I figured if my cousin didn't think it was fun, then it wasn't.

Two years later she recalls:

> ...after a while she left. It wasn't as much fun playing alone.

Is this an insignificant change? Not necessarily. In the first recall she accepts the other's definition of the situation. In the second, she does not give the other the power to define what is fun and what is not. She relies more on her own opinion. Another example of change in the ER of this subject is:

> Age 4—Playing with a little boy in an old car. He was opening the door. He slammed it and my finger was caught. I remember blood...I remember the smell of Lysol in the doctor's office. My mother and uncle were there.

> Age 4—There was an old black car on the grass in the middle of a lot with lots of trees. I was playing with a boy. We were going to get into the car. I was intrigued by the empty car with no grown-ups around. The door was open. Maybe I opened it. I remember a pain in my finger. (I don't remember how it got hurt). I ran to tell Mother and she took me to the doctor. I didn't mind going there because he was a friend of the family. I got my hand bandaged. His office was all yellow.

This ER, in both its versions, lends itself easily to a Freudian interpretation since the sexual allusions are so prominent—

"playing with a boy," "open door," "blood"—and the air of intrigue. Mosak (1958) pointed out the ER lent themselves to many different kinds of interpretations. For the Adlerian, the sexual allusions are also there, but in order to capture life style themes, the important point is not to confound content with theme. The sexual in this ER is to be taken as a ***modus dicendi,*** a manner of speaking, a metaphor. This can be seen clearly if we look at the difference between the first and second versions. In the first version, she is victim. In the second, she is an equal causative agent of the event; she takes responsibility. Furthermore, the outcome is not all bad; she recalls the doctor's office in a pleasant way. ***Her self-image is different.***

Such a change in the details indicates a different perception of life and helps us see why research studies which have only analyzed content do not capture the kind of diagnostic factors that a thematic configurational analysis (Levy & Grigg, 1962) can.

Age Factors in ER

We noted previously that ER from earlier ages have sparser detail than those from later ages. The earliest ER often lack connecting words such as "but," "because," "however," "then," which are plentiful in later ER. Sometimes the subject offers no very early ER. Recollections after age 9 are usually less suitable for such interpretation. We have noted situations, however, in which the subject experienced an important life change during childhood as in the loss of a parent, dethronement by a sibling, or marked change in fortunes of the family. These changes can have three types of effects.

The first (not in order of importance) effect is to produce ER which show a marked "before" and "after" view of the world so that ER before the age of the event are quite different, as if to say, "Once the world was thus, but now it is different."

The second effect is to have no ER at all before the age at which the life situation changed. ER then begin with the event itself or its immediate consequences. One common example of this is when the earliest ER is a dethronement memory—the birth of a younger sibling. No ER are retrieved from before that period.

The third effect is an age gap between ER. One or two ER may be presented from a very early age, then a lapse of several years and subsequent ER from the later years. The important event, itself, may never appear in the ER at all until it is recaptured later in therapy.

Importance of Details

We have previously discussed how details change in ER and how these details affect the interpretation. Details furthermore show some of the subject's characteristic action patterns:

> First day of school. I was a little bit dumbfounded. The teacher had introduced herself and so had each child. The east wall had a blackboard and the west wall, windows. Above was a colored ball or balls against a white background with the names of the colors.

In the details with which the subject embroiders the narrative, we can detect an observer who pays attention to every detail of the setting. We shall expect the subject to continue to show this characteristic behavior.

The Omitted Detail. Occasionally one encounters an ER which on the surface seems innocuous and easily interpreted. Yet if examined more closely, a gap seems to exist, something which does not seem to be explained within the ER. Sometimes it is a gratuitous detail, which appears not necessary to the narrative. Further questioning of this detail may yield what Dreikurs (1969) called a "goldmine." One such ER has been presented previously (Mosak, 1958).

> My family and two neighbors were sitting around the dining room table. It was a festive occasion. Everyone smiling, everyone pleased. Father was home.

The narrative could stand alone without including the last sentence. Since "everyone" was there, why does he mention his father specifically? Upon inquiry, the patient informs us that his father had just been released from a sanitarium. The family was a Christian Science family and such hospitalization was frowned upon by their religious beliefs. Although the patient no longer practiced his childhood faith, vestiges of his earlier beliefs still exist as does his need to deny the existence of illness.

Another such detail can be found in the following ER:

> Age 5—Saturday morning. I'm coming out of the hospital. My uncle and aunt were there to get me.

It seemed odd to the interpreter that the patient's uncle and aunt had picked him up since he had indicated that he had parents and had lived with them. Upon further questioning he revealed that the reason he was in the hospital was because his father had smothered the rest of the family with pillows and that he was the only one to survive.

Vocational Details. Adler (1937, 1958), Orgler (1972 [1939]) and Mosak (1958) have each pointed out that people in various vocations may reveal their occupational choice in ER. Adler (1964) indicated that physicians will have at least one ER about the themes of death, illness, or injury. The recollections of Freud, Adler, and Jung (Mosak & Kopp, 1973) and of Dreikurs (Terner & Pew, 1978) confirm this hypothesis. Our clinical experience suggests that artists and those people with a strong esthetic bent will include a color detail in their ER.

A mathematician relates—

> In the hospital after surgery. Being fed intravenously. I counted the drops as they came down the tube. No feeling about it except that it was interesting.

Positional Details. Dreikurs (1954) felt that the position of the subject in the ER suggested the stance toward life taken by the subject. A memory of lying flat on one's back in the crib suggested a different life stance than one of standing upright. Sitting in the high chair, being pushed in a stroller, looking up or looking down all suggested something about the subject's attitude toward life. A man who felt like an outsider on the periphery of life recalled:

> Age 8—I was sitting on the curb watching the other kids play ball across the street. I didn't go over.

The detail in this memory is "across the street." He himself was peripheral to the scene of action, an observer from a distance who does not enter the arena of social action.

Other Details. Using this same logic one can make other predictions. Subjects who recall tactile sensations (textures) may well have a sensual response to tactile stimuli; a great attention to affective details may point to a person who is more than usually sensitive to his/her own inner feelings (Peven & Shulman, 1983); movement details suggest an active style of responding to stimuli (Hedvig, 1965) and so forth.

ER of Trivial Events

Since the ER are treated as projections, no trivial ER exist. However, what seems like the ER of a trivial event often deals with important people or issues. In the previously given ER of the cousin who was bored playing in the galvanized tub, the subject tells us that this cousin was her chief rival in childhood.

> I was in my uncle's car by myself. I was in the driver's seat and turning the wheel and pretending I was driving.

What small boy has not done this? Yet, that it is offered as an ER makes it an important issue for the patient. It suggests that his ambition is to be able to do what adult males do, but in his projection, he sees himself as "pretending" to do what men do. Trivial ER reveal as much as dramatic ones.

Sequence of ER

ER can be considered as a creative artistic product of the person, as if they were an autobiography which not only describes events but also the person's creative responses to them. They can be compared in structure to a musical composition with its themes and variations. Being an artistic product, the sequence of the memories in itself helps in their interpretation. ER from an early stage may state the theme starkly while those from a later age with added details can show elaborations on the theme. While one ER may be hard to understand, a group of ER more surely shows the common themes that run throughout.

> Age 9—We had a spelling bee. I was the last one standing. It felt great.

The second ER from this person is an elaboration on the same theme:

> Age 8—We were playing "King of the mountain." While everybody was pushing everyone around to get to the top, I sneaked around the other side and walked to the top unmolested. I don't know how long I stayed on top but it sure felt good being there.

The theme is the same, but with a variation. Winning is equated with being "on top" (a positional detail). Note that in this ER he takes a detour to get to the top through an avenue left unnoticed by the others. He uses guile rather than skill. By hook or by crook he attains the superior position.

The third ER shows another variation.

> Age 7—It was the first day of school. All the kids were crying. I felt it was silly of them.

Knowing the previous two ER, this one is clear. Here is another way in which he is superior. He acts maturely while the others act childishly. He achieves his superior position by winning directly or failing that he resorts to a roundabout route or finds some other way to look down on others. All these ER have a single theme, no matter what the variations. The sequence confirms and elaborates the theme.

Contrasting ER. The fourth ER shows a contrast.

> Age 7—We were at a picnic and they had races for prizes, I came in second in my heat. I was crushed.

The common theme in these ER can be seen by contrasting them. (Contrast is an important way to elicit the meanings of ER.) In three he wins, in the fourth he loses. The important issue for him is to be a winner. Even second place is not good enough.

Whereas the motive of the person who gives the above ER is to be superior to others, the motive in the following set is self-control. But this is not as simple a group of ER to interpret because the four ER show a contrapuntal arrangement. The first contrasts with the second; the third seems to repeat the theme of the first but when contrasted with the fourth, the latter two show a variation which actually gives us a second theme.

> Age 3—One time I made in my pants. I was playing in the yard. I felt ashamed.
>
> Age 5—The doctor came to give me a shot every other day. One time I didn't cry. I got to be a pro at it. He was proud of me. I felt real good about being able to take it without screaming.

If he loses self-control, he loses face. If he maintains self-control, he wins the approval of others and his self-esteem is intact. In one case he successfully endures; in the other he cannot hold out.

> Age 5—Riding with Father to the office. I threw up in the car all over myself. I got car sick. I was very upset with myself but I couldn't control it (the vomiting).

This sounds like a repeat of the first ER. Again he cannot control the behavior of his own body, but here he reports he is upset with himself rather than ashamed. This may seem like splitting hairs but the contrast with the next ER will show that the ER also compare anger at oneself versus anger at others.

> Age 4—I was in the hospital having my tonsils out. I didn't want to be there. Then I recall the ether. It was a black mask. It was scary. I didn't know what they would do to me. I woke up in my crib and was angry. I had to use the bedpan. The only thing they did that they said they'd do was to give me ice cream. I was kicking and screaming the whole time in the hospital.

Since all of these ER are concerned with illness and three of them with the digestive tract, one wonders if this person suffers from a physical illness or is inordinately concerned with health (as a physician is). The fourth memory is like the second in that illness and medical treatment are portrayed but the theme in the fourth is no longer self-control. The way in which the fourth elaborates the discomfort of medical treatment is only suggested in the second ("one time I didn't cry"). In the fourth memory he takes up for the first time the issue of his anger at others. Here the contrast with the third ER is useful. There he was angry with himself; here he is angry at others.

What determines the object of his anger? It depends on who is the source of his trouble. In the fourth memory he does not focus on self-control but on the power and control that others have over him. In the ER he is first afraid and then angry. The fear is now gone and he justifies his anger at the others ("The only thing they did that they said they'd do was give me ice cream"). This ER suggests that the chance to find fault with others is face-saving for him and compensates for his own unhappiness with his perceived fault of not keeping his own nervous system under control.

In this second set of ER, all the situations are unpleasant. Becoming angry at others because they are at fault suggests that this person may have to search for faults in others. At the same time he seems distrustful of himself and wants to control his own natural and entirely normal physical responses to situations. In contrast to the person in the first ER set, for the second person life seems precarious. The first subject can find different ways of achieving his goal of superiority. The second subject preserves his self-esteem either by self-control or with anger at others. His important issues are power and control.

The One Different ER. On occasion, one ER may be different from all others. It often can be found sequentially separate; that is, it appears as the first ER (a prologue) or the last (an epilogue). This different ER offers a contrast to the others.

> Age 3—Father brought home new tooth brushes. He taught me and all the others to brush our teeth. It was a lot of fun.

This ER is a prologue to the others. It is a memory of a pleasant occasion initiated by her father who died when the

This ER is a prologue to the others. It is a memory of a pleasant occasion initiated by her father who died when the subject was young. Father was a source of security for the whole family. The subsequent memories are all different.

> Age 3—I cried all morning. I wanted to put on overalls like my brother and Mother wouldn't let me.
>
> Age 4—An older girl came by with crochet hooks and tried to teach Sister and me to use them. Sister learned, but I was too young.
>
> Age 3—We went to the grocery store. I carried the eggs home. They were all broken when I got home.
>
> Age 5—First day in school. I wore a cotton dress. Most of the girls were in organdies or silks. I felt humiliated.
>
> Age 6—I took my new ball to school. Someone borrowed it and lost it. At the end of the day a boy brought me an old ball but it wasn't mine. It was old and battered.

First memories like this one can be thought of as "Garden of Eden" memories. They portray how life should be—happy, with good human relations and satisfying interactions. All the subsequent ER depict life as she perceives it—unfair, unrewarding, and herself as less than others. By its contrast, the first ER stands as reminder of what she feels she is missing in life and makes more poignant the disappointments in the subsequent ER.

ELEMENTS OF ER

As we have examined the attempts to categorize ER, or parts of them, we have always found some objection to the categories. Even Adler's effort to categorize some aspects of ER can be no more than a hint of what the ER may mean. Thus, when he says that early memories in which the mother is prominent suggest a pampered child, the key word is ***suggest.*** Adler's own words are as follows:

> Provided we possess the requisite experience and use the utmost care, we may in most cases discover from the earliest recollections the mistaken direction of the life path, the lack of social interest or the contrary. Much, too, comes to light through the choice of presentation of a "we" or "I" situation. Much, too, comes to light from the mention of the mother. Recollections of dangers and accidents, as well of corporal and other punishments, disclose the exaggerated tendency to keep in mind particularly the hostile side of life. The recollection of the first visit to the kindergarten or school shows the great impression produced by new situations. The recollection of sickness or death is often linked with a fear of these dangers, and occasionally with the attempt to become better equipped to meet them, possibly as a doctor or a nurse or similarly. Recollections of a stay in the country with the mother, as well as the mention of certain persons like the mother, the father, or the grandparents in a friendly atmosphere, often show not only a preference for these persons who evidently pampered the child, but also the exclusion of others. Recollections of misdeeds, thefts, and sexual misdemeanors which have been committed usually point to a great effort to keep them from occurring again. Occasionally, one learns also of other interests, such as visual, auditory, or motor interests, which may give occasion to uncover failures in school and a mistaken occupational choice, and indicate an occupation which corresponds better to the preparation for life. (1964b, pp. 210-211)

Adler's statement provides some reasonable guidelines. The various ER may indeed mean what Adler said, but he described topics and issues. How the individual responds is equally important.

Keeping this warning in mind we will classify ER according to certain content categories for the purpose of explanation and teaching and separate these from the method of interpreting the ER for the purpose of arriving at a formulation of the individual life style.

ER Thematic Topics

Levy and Grigg (1962) used three theme categories—dependency/independence, aggression, and sexuality. They then subdivided these themes according to the type of response the subject made to each of these themes. We will define "topic" as the issue being faced by the subject but we will also include other ER types such as "prologue" and "epilogue" memories to allow us a more complete development of this category. Any one set of memories may show more than one theme. This classification will not be based on the type of response the subject makes to the issue in the ER because we want to place this in a separate category. For our purpose we will use the ER we have already discussed in this chapter as well as others.

Victim. The ER given by Kadis and Lazarsfeld (1948) is an example of a victim theme. The girl could not be the flower girl at her aunt's wedding because her sister chopped her hair off. Note that we do not classify this under the theme of body injury because the ER focused on the disappointment not on the haircut. She is the victim of what someone else has done to her. Another victim ER:

> Age 6—I was playing with a Santa Claus house on the floor. A cousin stepped on it.

Competition. The two ER about winning the spelling bee and losing the race are examples of a competition theme. This theme deals with winning and losing or how well one does in comparison to others.

Separation. Separation from a parent or absence of a parent is seen in the ER in which the boy rides the skates happily in the basement while his mother is in the hospital. The response suggests a successful denial of the pain of separation.

Next is a memory of a woman whose mother placed her with foster parents when she was three.

> Age 3—I am sitting on a desk and being told that two people there are my parents and I insist that they are not...At the railroad station I said goodbye to Mother. She

> gave me some pennies tied in a handkerchief . . . Foster Father stepped off the train and took me from Mother and went back on the train . . . I was going curiously down the aisle exploring and was being brought back by Foster Father. It was like a game. . . . I was being carried by Foster Mother. Some people met us. I had the general feeling that it was all a mistake.

Disappointment. This theme is seen in the memory of the two girls playing in a galvanized tub.

> Age 4—. . . after awhile she left. It wasn't as much fun playing alone.

Bodily Injury. The memory of the same subject about her experience in the abandoned car is a bodily injury memory. However, the setting offers many sexual allusions. This could just as easily be classified as a sexual memory.

A memory from a male shows the bodily injury.

> Age 4—A puppy came in my direction. I ran and fell and hit the corner of the step and cut myself. I was bleeding like a pig and ran into the house screaming. Father and Mother took care of me. Mother quieted me down.

Obviously, the response the subject makes to the bodily injury will determine how the ER is interpreted. For the sake of brevity, we will list and describe briefly a number of other thematic issues that can be found in ER. They are listed in Table 6.1.

One memory may appear to fit into more than one category.

> Age 4—I came into the room dancing. I fell and sprained my ankle while twisting.

Is the issue a SURPRISE, LUCK, or COMPETENCE? More ER from the same subject probably would help clarify the question. Let us look at a set of ER from another subject.

(Continued on p. 195)

TABLE 6.1
Common Thematic Topics Found in ER

DETHRONEMENT—the birth of a younger sibling or the entry onto the scene of another person who takes center stage.

SURPRISES—unexpected events occur.

OBSTACLES—ER in which one's way is blocked by an obstacle or by the action of another person.

AFFILIATION—ER of pleasant bonds with others or of a distance between the self and others.

SECURITY—feelings of security or insecurity. Since affiliation is the most important basis for security in early childhood, SECURITY and AFFILIATION are often found together. Memories of being frightened can be usually classified here.

SKILL TASKS—ER of situations which require some competence.

DEPENDENCY—ER of being dependent on others or of being self-reliant.

EXTERNAL AUTHORITY—ER of being expected to comply with a set of rules.

SELF CONTROL—the issue of being or not being able to control oneself; e.g., being able to control one's own bowel movements.

STATUS—the issue of how important one is in the eyes of others, of how one becomes significant in the group.

POWER—The issue of who is in the dominant and controlling position, oneself or someone else.

MORALITY—The issues of right and wrong, fair and unfair, good and bad. MORALITY ER often show the use of a moral attitude to raise one's status, to be superior to others or to be morally inferior to others. STATUS issues are often found together with MORALITY.

TABLE 6.1 (Continued)

HUMAN INTERACTION—ER with a specific focus on how people relate to each other. This is often expressed through the POWER, MORALITY, and STATUS themes. It is a picture of the world of social transactions.

NEW SITUATIONS—The first day at school or first day in a new neighborhood are prototype ER of this issue. SEPARATION and AFFILIATION issues are often combined with NEW SITUATION issues as are COMPETENCE and SECURITY issues.

EXCITEMENT—ER which focus on the amount of excitement or commotion in a situation. The excitement may be pleasant or unpleasant.

SEXUALITY—ER of childhood sex games, encounters with adults, or of observing sexual activity.

GENDER—ER which focus on the issues of masculinity or femininity. These also may be combined with SEXUALITY.

NURTURANCE—ER which focus on receiving affection, nurture, service, attention, or gifts from others.

CONFUSION—ER which focus on ambiguity and poorly understood events.

LUCK—ER which focus on the vagaries of fate.

SICKNESS and DEATH—ER about this topic and the effect it has on others.

GARDEN OF EDEN—An ER which depicts how life should be as opposed to how it actually is. Idyllic ER.

Age 3—Playing on the floor with beads. I swallowed one. Sister picked me up and ran out to the fields to get Mother. She wasn't perturbed.

Age 3—Playing in the kitchen near trapdoor. The door fell down on my leg. Sister picked me up and cried as hard as I did.

Age 3-4—I took hold of a hot poker, burned my hand, screamed. Mother got a jar of salve. I stuck my whole hand into it.

Age 7—I had a nosebleed in class. I left the room. Teacher came out and petted me and took me home.

The main thematic content of these ER seems at first to be bodily injury but being nurtured by others is an equally important topic: Put together, it suggests that this person views bodily injury as something that automatically elicits nurturance from others.

This list of thematic topics is not exhaustive. It is a representative sample of frequently found topics in ER. This category does not attempt to classify the behavioral responses reported in the ER. For that we need another category.

ER Response Themes

Each response in an ER is a response to the particular topical issue in the ER. Thus, if the topic is EXTERNAL AUTHORITY we can expect the subject to choose from among a range of responses from willing compliance with a desire for approval to open defiance of the rules. In any idiographic interpretation we shall have to identify both the topic and the unique response the individual selects. The range of human responses is much wider than the range of topics but we shall again try to give a representative sample of frequent response themes. A few examples follow:

Age 2-3—My parents gave me a toy piano. I was delighted.

The topic is one we have called NURTURANCE. The response is to be pleased, to enjoy the gift.

> Age 6—It was the first day of the first grade. I went home at noon and told my mother I wasn't going back.

The topic may be NEW SITUATIONS or EXTERNAL AUTHORITY. The response is a refusal to comply with the demand.

> Age 2-3—I was lying in the crib, unable to move. I couldn't get up. I screamed. Mother rushed upstairs, picked me up and told me everything was okay.

The topic seems to be DEPENDENCY or SELF-CONTROL. The response is to send out an SOS which brings the desired help.

After we have categorized the topics in the ER, we still have to understand the response the person makes. The response is more important than the topic, showing the creative behaviors used by the person to cope with the various challenges implied in the topics. The following list shows common behavioral responses to a variety of topics, with representative examples.

In reviewing the list, keep in mind that clinical interpretation has a richness of nuances that is not found in mere lists and tables of categories. Categories are useful for research and teaching but they do not replace the whole pattern that the skillful clinician derives from the material. A list of representative response themes is presented in Table 6.2 and examples of response themes are presented in Table 6.3.

Perhaps this brief list (Table 6.3) can given an impression of the myriad number of responses human beings are able to make to various challenging issues in their worlds.

Life Style Elements in ER

The relationship between the thematic topic and response theme can be expressed as an "If **a,** then **b**" linear relationship. An ER will demonstrate this:

> Age 8—My brother and a friend and I got into trouble at school. We were sent into the cloak room where we ate all the lunches. The teacher beat us up. It hurt. Eating the lunches was my idea because I wanted to get even with the teacher.

TABLE 6.2
A List of Representative Response Themes

OBSERVER—a passive spectator of events.

PROBLEM-SOLVING—active problem solving behavior, sometimes quite creative.

COMPLIANCE/REBELLION—the ER show a range of behaviors from compliance to defiance.

CALL FOR HELP—overtly or covertly signaling to others that their aid is needed.

REVENGE—getting even with others, even in a self-destructive way.

SUFFERING—ER of impotent anger, unhappiness, or other forms of distress as the main and sometimes only response to a problem situation.

MANIPULATION—demanding special service from others, intimidating or forcing them.

SEEKING EXCITEMENT—voluntarily creating exciting situations.

PRETENSE—pretending to be what one is not for the purpose of concealing one's own defects or enhancing one's status.

DENIAL—solving the problem of an unpleasant situation by focusing elsewhere than on the unpleasantness.

RESOLVE—the decision to behave a certain way or do a certain thing in the future. The planned action is to increase security or self-esteem.

COMPETENCE—ER of competent or incompetent response to a skill task.

TABLE 6.2 (Continued)

SOCIAL INTEREST—the presence or absence of prosocial behavior.

ACTIVITY—whether the response is active or passive to the challenge situation.

DISTANCE KEEPING—the tendency to withdraw from and avoid challenges.

COOPERATION—the presence or absence of collaboration in the ER. It may be for good or for evil purpose, but shows the ability to collaborate with others, the resolve to or action of taking responsibility for meeting a situation.

OVERCONFIDENCE—experiencing an unpleasant result because one tried to do more than he was capable of such as being too daring and getting hurt. The topic may be called ACCEPTING LIMITS.

SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT—making oneself more important than one really is.

CRITICISM—fault finding as a response to challenges. One type is fault finding itself, the identification of what is wrong. Another type is blaming, the attribution of responsibility for the fault.

FEELING AVOIDANCE—the tendency to avoid, suppress, and ignore affect. See also DENIAL.

TABLE 6.3
Examples of Response Themes in ER

OBSERVER and DISTANCE KEEPING . . . I was sitting on the curb watching the other kids play ball across the street. I didn't go over.

PROBLEM SOLVING . . . We were playing "King of the mountain" . . . I sneaked around the other side and walked to the top unmolested . . .

COMPLIANCE/REBELLION and REVENGE . . . My father sent me to my room because I wouldn't eat vegetables. I was irked. I opened the window and pee'd on the eave of the roof.

CALL FOR HELP . . . I ran to tell Mother and she took me to the doctor.

SUFFERING . . . Most of the girls were in organdies or silks. I felt humiliated.

MANIPULATION . . . I wanted to sit on the front seat with my father. I cried and cried until they put me in the front seat to shut me up.

SEEKING EXCITEMENT . . . I was on a swing going up as high as I could. It was exhilarating.

PRETENSE . . . I pretended to drive the car.

DENIAL . . . I counted the drops as they came down the tube.

FEELING AVOIDANCE . . . No feeling . . . it was interesting.

COMPETENCE . . . I climbed a big tree . . .

SOCIAL INTEREST . . . and threw rocks at the caretaker of the cottage . . .

ACTIVITY . . . I didn't fight back. I thought, if I weren't a cripple, I would beat him.

COOPERATION . . . My father and I were rolling a ball back and forth to each other . . .

SELF-RELIANCE . . . My mother didn't come for me when school was over. I walked home myself.

OVERCONFIDENCE . . . I climbed on the bureau. I found a razor blade. I fell off and cut my nose.

SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT . . . I had no fear whatever. I felt like nothing could happen to me.

CRITICISM . . . I was angry . . . The only thing they did that they said they'd do was to give . . .

The linear relationship is as follows:

If ***I get into trouble,***

then ***I will be punished.***

If ***I take revenge for the punishment,***

then ***I will get into more trouble.***

This way of teasing out and then integrating the elements in the ER go a long way toward producing a final interpretation. However, life style formulation requires that we examine more elements. In Chapter I we described the life style elements as a set of convictions about "what is," a set of convictions about "what should be," and a set of instructions for behavior. (See Table 1.1.) Topics in ER afford us information about what is important and response themes about the methods to use. Now let us see if we can draw from the ER the categories of self-concept and world view.

> Age 3—I climbed to the top of the bureau. I found a razor blade there. I fell off and cut my nose.

Self-image. The self-image aspect of the self-concept is evident. What is he? He is someone who will only suffer if he climbs too high. He will tumble and be hurt.

> Age 7-8—A boy tried to beat me up. I was scared and resigned myself to being beaten up. I didn't fight back. I thought, "If I weren't a cripple (club feet), I would beat him."

What is he? He is a cripple who cannot defend himself against physical aggression by peers.

While the body sense and self-identity aspects of the self-concept tend to remain consistent, the self-image is often contingent upon circumstances as the next ER shows.

> Age 8-9—In the country. I climbed a big tree and threw rocks at the caretaker of the cottage down below. I had no fear whatsoever. I felt like nothing could happen to me.

This ER shows that his self-image depends on how high and secure he can make his location ***vis a vis*** others. If he can get high enough, he can do as he pleases to others without fear of consequences.

Self-esteem is considered a function of the self-image. Self-esteem varies in all of us and its determinants change over time. What affords self-esteem is different for a small child than an adult, for a male than for a female. Some experiences increase it, others lower it. An example is the set of ER from the child who couldn't control his bowel movements and was ashamed, but could take his injection like a "pro" and was proud of it.

World View. The ER can show us how the subject assesses the world around himself or herself.

> Age 7—Standing behind a swing awaiting my turn. The boy swung back and knocked my teeth loose.

For her, life is precarious for unwary people.

> Age 5—First day of school. The teacher was very nice. She gave us treats to eat. There were pillows to lie on. I enjoyed it.

This subject finds some new situations in life almost sybaritically pleasant.

Relationship Between Self-concept and World View. By labeling these two categories as separate we have divided something that really is an interactive unit. Self-concept and world view are two sides of the same coin, one cannot exist without the other. Any self-concept is always embedded in a setting. As one or the other emerges as a figure from the background, it becomes more discernable in an ER. Thus different ER which will highlight either self-concept or world view should always be treated like a paired unit. One without the other is essentially an incomplete picture of an internal mental construct.

Dominant Goal/Self-Ideal. As is becoming apparent, many ER show one or perhaps two aspects of the life style components. Some ER show a clear model of what is desirable to pursue in life.

> Age 5-6—Mother asked my cousin to carry me on his shoulders in the country because I was the baby and it was a long walk. I felt good that I should be carried and didn't have to walk.

Here is a person who enjoys the prerogatives of being the baby. The baby is permitted dependence and entitled to service from others. Others are to make life easier for the person. This ER reveals a self-image and a dominant goal. If one is a baby, one can achieve significance in life through being cared for by others. Note that the theme of being elevated above others (positional detail) is also present in this ER.

Any dominant goal/self ideal grows logically out of the self-image and world view, allowing us to use the rubric we mentioned in Chapter 1:

I am ________________________, Life is ________________________.

Therefore ____.

We have several times used the ER of the boy who couldn't control his bowel movement as an example and we can do so again. We can see that his self-ideal is to be able to control himself. The next two ER from another subject show another dominant goal.

> Age 4-5—We had a Christmas tree but we couldn't afford a stand for it because we were poor. We had to put it in a jar of water. I felt bad about that. At the same time it was snowing. I stood on the porch watching and wanted to play in the snow but I didn't have any galoshes.
>
> Age 5—First day in kindergarten. I was happy because I had my own box of crayons and felt that the other kids were silly to cry when their mothers left.

Not surprisingly, this subject's first priority in life was to have enough money so that he always would be able to have the material things he wanted.

Ethical Values. As stated in Chapter 1, the ethical values show convictions about "what should be," the ideal world and ideal behavior.

> Age 4—Cousins visiting. I was repulsed when one of the cousins chewed potatoes with his mouth open. It was almost shocking.

Proper behavior is an important topic for this subject.

> Age 8—I bet a boy my roller skates against his BB gun that I could jump four stairs. I won the bet and took his gun home. My parents wouldn't let me keep it. I thought it was unfair because I won it fair and square.

A deal is a deal, and outsiders should not interfere, as long as it was fair and square.

> Age 3—I burned my hand. I recall them sitting on the couch. Father wrapped my hand in a handkerchief. I felt safe and good because all four of us were together.

This is an ER which makes a judgment about what is one desirable situation in life. When one has suffered an injury, the good is when the significant others can all be together. That is what provides security and happiness.

Methods of Operation. Sometimes the ER will reveal the ***modus operandi*** used by the subject in meeting life. One previous example is in the ER of the subject who won the spelling bee, went around the back of the mountain in order to reach the top, and felt superior to the other children in school who were crying. Since his dominant goal/self-ideal was to be "on top," he uses direct accomplishment, taking advantage and "putting others down," whatever works in the situation (by hook or by crook) to accomplish his goal.

Another subject gives an ER which shows direct behavior with little consideration for others.

> Age 7-8—I had to go to the bathroom very badly. My sister was in there. She was sitting on the toilet. I urinated on her.

The ***modus operandi*** in the next one is to imitate the behavior of older males.

> Age 5-6—I went to a farm with my uncles and mother and father. My uncles got into the pig sty and began to kick the pigs. I tried the same thing. It was a lot of fun.

In the next one, the method is to suffer.

> Age 5—One day I was kidded by some adult relatives for liking a girl. It hurt.

We have previously discussed methods of operation when we discussed ***response themes.*** The method of operation fundamental to the life style however is that method by which the subject negotiates his relationship with life (as revealed in the world view) and which is used to achieve the dominant goal/self ideal.

Affect in the ER

We have from time to time noted the presence of affect recall in ER. In asking questions to increase our comprehension of the ER, we have asked, "Do you remember how you felt at the time?" Sometimes, the reported affect has been the crucial detail that explained the ER. Sometimes it shows us a feeling "style." When ER change over time, the change may be most evident in a change of feeling. Using the following examples, we will try to show how various aspects of affect in the ER can be interpreted.

Affect Reveals a Response to the World. The following ER are from a 35 year old woman.

> Age 2-3—There was a burglar in the house. Everyone was terrified.
>
> Age 4—I was hiding in the back of the door. A man was yelling, "I'll kill that damn brat. She's always crying." A woman picked me up and ran out of the door to get away from the man. I was frightened.

The ER suggest that strange men are dangerous. The ER show no ability to protect herself, a feeling of helplessness. She depends on someone else, a woman, to rescue her. The following two ER show a different picture of the world and a different response. They are the memories of an exhibitionist.

> Age 5—My friend and I were playing in the sand. He had to urinate and took off his shorts. Two older girls passed by. I told him not to put his pants back on. The girls stopped and talked to us. I got a thrill out of it.

> Age 6—I was walking home. I had my pants wide open. An older woman passed me and said, "You better stop that or I'll tell your mother." I was scared, but I didn't believe she knew my mother (feeling?). I had a thrill from being seen.

Note that he knows he is doing something considered wrong but he enjoys the mischief he performs and its power to impress women.

Affect Expresses a Value. The next two ER from a 35 year old man shows what he values highly and what he depreciates.

> Age 6—I played doctor with a girl. I examined her. Discovered she had no penis. No reaction.

> Age 6—Outside my aunt's house. Saw a naked man in a window. Shocked. Couldn't get over the size of his penis.

What men have is far more impressive than what women have.

Absence of Affect May Indicate Feeling Avoidance As a Response. Earlier in this chapter, we gave the ER of a man who recalled watching the drops in his intravenous fluid after surgery. He also recalled no feeling. Ignoring, not recalling a feeling, may point to a coping style in which distressing emotions are managed by avoiding or ignoring them.

Affective Detail Which Reveals the Meaning. The feeling may be the detail which explains the memory.

> Age 6—I grew big pumpkins. One morning I went to tend my pumpkins and the biggest was gone. I was very upset.

> Later, I found it in the alley, dropped and burst open (feeling?). I felt better, because if I couldn't have it, they shouldn't either.

Without this last detail, one would miss the enjoyment of revenge, which is a theme in this ER (Peven & Shulman, 1986).

Changing Affect in ER. We have previously mentioned that affect in ER may be contaminated by current mood in Chapter 3 and earlier in this chapter. When a depression lifts, the subject's memories will often show more light-hearted affect, but affect is not the same as theme in ER and should not be confused.

SUMMARIZING THE INTERPRETATION OF ER

Manaster and Perryman (1974) developed a scale to test the proposition that the manifest content of ER could distinguish between persons choosing different occupations. They used subjects from five different occupational categories: teaching, counseling, nursing/medical, biological science, and accounting/business. They studied mainly content variables such as which family members were mentioned, the location of the memory, whether the subject was active or passive, and so forth. Some statistically significant differences were found such as that the nursing/medical group had the highest proportion of subjects who mentioned "mother" while the teaching group had the highest proportion who mentioned "nonfamily members."

Essentially, this experiment used the content of the memory and related it to occupational choice. The ER were not interpreted idiographically nor did the experimenters look for life style material. However, some of the content categories in the scale come close to a thematic interpretation of the ER such as whether the subject showed active or passive behavior in the memory. Their scale is worthy of further research.

Kopp and Der (1979) used a different method. They collected a series of ER from the subject and formed a hypothesis about each phrase in each ER. They looked for correlations and confirming statements. What the subject confirmed was assumed to be valid. Their scale thus includes every "action every "action statement" in the series of ER. What Kopp and Der have described is a method of systematically guessing at the meaning of each phrase similar to the way Adler used to guess about the meaning of each statement in a patient's clinical history (Adler 1969b/1931).

Altman (1973) developed an Early Recollections Rating Scale containing nine bipolar attitudes divided into two groups. The first group was "subject's behavior toward environment" and the second was "subject's affective response." The nine bipolar attitudes are shown in Table 6.4.

TABLE 6.4
Eckstein's (1976) Rating Scale
(after Altman, 1973; & Quinn, 1973)

Subject's behavior toward environment

withdrawn—gregarious
passive—active
competitive—cooperative
dependent—independent

Subject's affective response

hostile—friendly
feels rejected—feels accepted
discouraged—self confident
depressed—cheerful
feels mistreated—feels befriended

Eckstein (1976) used Altman's scale (1973) modified by Quinn (1973), in a study of changes in ER after counseling. He was able to score changes in the specific bipolar attitudes using his scale. This method of scoring does not seem to have been used to elicit a life style formulation, but did seem useful in measuring change.

We shall attempt a more elaborate system in order to pick up the idiographic life style information which our theory says can be found in the ER. The list is not exhaustive but probably will cover the great majority of themes we can find in the ER. We also list a number of common response themes, which we will use. In addition we will examine the sequence construction in each set of ER to assess the sequential interaction between themes. Then we shall try to elicit from each theme certain internal cognitive constructions which are, according to our theory, component constructs of the life style.

The material we elicited from FC data was descriptions of behavior. From the behavior we inferred the existence of certain internal cognitions. Now we shall be inferring the existence of cognitions from the subject's report of ER, not only from the behavior described in the ER but also from the progress of events, from the themes chosen to be recalled, and from the message to the self inherent in the creative artistic reconstruction of the memory.

The component constructs of the life style we seek are constructs about "what is," "what should be," and "what is to be done." We have categorized these constructs as containing a self-image, a world view, and a dominant goal and/or self ideal. Sometimes, the ER will even give us information about favored methods of operation, as in the ER of the subject who tried to be superior by winning out over others either directly, by a roundabout way, or by depreciating them.

The interpretation of ER data should complement the interpretation of FC data. Dreikurs (personal communication) used to say that from knowing the FC, one may predict issues in the ER. However, the ER does not have the power to denote psychogenesis that FC has, except for the fact that an internal master plan is in itself a motivator of behavior, perhaps the most important motivator of all. We do expect the ER interpretation to have considerable predictive power as described by Adler (1964b/1929) and Mosak (1965).

Earlier, we used selected ER examples in order to discuss different aspects of ER such as age effects, the presence or absence of background information, the meaning of small connecting words, the meaning of various details, the presence or absence of affect, and so forth. Let us now take a group of ER from one subject and extensively discuss and tabulate them.

ER of Fred, age 21. An only child (the actor you love to hiss)

Age 2—I remember being carried from bed in a dark corner of the room to a table with a cold sheet wrapped around me. There was a light shining in my eyes. It was uncomfortable.

Age 5—I was sitting on the bed next to mother. I touched her breasts. It felt pleasant. Mother looked at me angrily. I was shocked. I wondered why she was angry.

Age 5—I was sitting in the kitchen on a cupboard and Mother was feeding me groats. I didn't like it.

Age 5—It was my bedtime. The room was full of people. I remember getting undressed to go to bed and standing on the bed with my butt naked. I bent over to look through my legs at the people, trying to get their attention.

Age 5—I misbehaved at the dinner table. I don't remember how. I got a look of anger from Father and I wondered why.

Age 5—I looked in the dresser drawer and found a condom. I didn't know what it was and I asked Mother. She took it away and was angry. I wondered what it was all about.

Age 7—I was in the bathroom watching Father wash his hands. I was waiting to wash. I admired all the bubbles Father was making with the soap lather. When it was my turn I tried but I couldn't make bubbles.

Age 5—I touched an electric outlet in the wall and I got a shock.

There are eight ER in this group ranging in age from two to seven. In each ER something is being done to him which he doesn't like or he tries to do something and receives unpleasant feedback. The sequence construction is simple since only these two kinds of events occur. If we had stopped collecting the ER after the first four, we would have about the same data for interpretation.

These ER contain positional details that we should note. For example, Fred is on a table with a light shining on him, sitting on a cupboard, sitting on a bed next to mother, or standing on a bed and presenting his backside to a room full of people. In every ER he is either in the center of the stage or trying to be. He is the chief protagonist of every ER, no matter what other ***dramatis personae*** are present.

Mood is also mentioned in each ER. Every event is associated with a feeling response. Each ER tells us how Fred feels about the world and his place in it.

Table 6.1 listed 22 thematic topics commonly found in ER. Several of these topics are found in this group of ER—***surprises, skill tasks, human interaction, sexuality, nurturance,*** and ***confusion.*** However, the predominant topic in this set of memories is the topic of himself in the world and the surprises and obstacles he encounters in his peregrinations through the world. Furthermore, the world is encompassed by his home and family, none of the ER events are outside the home. We can still score his response to each of the theme topics. The scoring is provided in Table 6.5.

What kind of person would have ER of this type? Such ER are more often found in an only child who had his/her major contacts with the parents. The parents in the example are the "authorities" and he is a subordinate whose main relationship to the parents is one disapproving of their nurturing attempts and eliciting their disapproval by misbehavior. Misbehavior is what captures their attention but misbehavior of a minor mischievous type, of a small boy, rather than defiant inimical behavior. As Dreikurs stated, the only child is

> like a dwarf among giants. He spends his entire childhood among persons whose capacities are far superior to his. For this reason he may try to develop techniques and qualities that will gain him the interest and approbation of grown ups without particular achievement on his part. (1948, p. 47)

TABLE 6.5
Fred's Responses to Thematic Topics Using The Classification System

SURPRISES—Fred finds life full of unpleasant and confusing surprises but if we look closely at this theme we note that the surprise and confusion is a response and not a stimulus situation. He does not report a response to the surprise—the response *is* a surprise or shock. Even the shock from the electric outlet is not reported as eliciting a further response.

SKILL TASKS—Fred fails in his attempt to do what father does while washing his hands. The essential idea in this ER is that he fails to be as skilled as Father. It is the comparison rather than the task that is important.

HUMAN INTERACTION—This issue is found confusing by Fred. At least, Fred claims to be confused by the responses of his parents to his misbehaviors, to his sexual curiosity. The absence of peer memories seems to make all his interactions those with adult authority figures. These adults seem to control his existence, limit his activities, punish his innocent misbehaviors, and confuse him.

SEXUALITY—The ER suggest a strong interest in sex with confusion about what it means. One thing is certain, it has the power to elicit strong responses from the mother. It can be a powerful tool for getting attention, even negative attention.

NURTURANCE—This topic leads to a negative response. The feeding activity of Mother is not welcome to him. He doesn't like her food. When he turns to her for guidance or pleasure, she becomes angry at him. There is no overt complaint against her, just surprise and confusion.

CONFUSION—Like surprise, this is his response, not a challenge stimulus. He is surprised and confused by the responses of others to him.

MISBEHAVIOR—This is another topic we should include. His misbehavior is disguised by him as innocent play or exploration. The display of his backside is only an "innocent" bid for attention. Touching Mother's breast is only pleasant play. Even his misbehavior at the table is not intended to annoy. The misbehavior produces disapproval and his response to the disapproval is surprise and confusion.

Fred's ER suggest that mischieviousness is an excellent way of persuading others to pay attention to him.

In this set of ER no small connecting words seem crucial to the interpretation, no "buts" or "ifs." Background information is absent. The ER are short and pictorial. The earliest, from age two is, as expected, sketchy, only a fragment, but it says very clearly that he was taken from his warm, quiet, and dark corner, and placed in a cold and undesirable position, exposed to the bright light, thrust into a cold and unpleasant world where the subsequent ER show he tried to find some attention by keeping others busy with him but found only rejection; where he tried to be as much of a man as father but was short on skills and where his exploration only ended in shocked surprise. This interpretation is easy to reach if we take the first ER as a prologue memory—an introduction to the others. The first ER then says, "I was thrust into the limelight in a cold world" subsequent ER say, "I'm just trying to amuse the audience during my time on stage."

Life Style Elements. If possible, we would like to elicit from the ER those internal constructs we call the life style elements—the self-image, the world view, the dominant goal/self ideal, and the method of operation or main way of pursuing the dominant goal/self ideal. Can we do this with these ER? Can we not conclude that his ***self image*** is that he does not make a favorable impression on others and is not as capable as they? His ***world view*** seems to be that others will reject his self-assertions and his attempts to affiliate (they disapprove of him). His goal remains to make an impression even if he has to play the impish clown.

We can summarize this as follows:

> Self-image—less capable and unacceptable to others.
>
> World view—the world is a confusing place where others disapprove of and reject him.
>
> Dominant goal—to occupy center stage. To make an impression.
>
> Method of operation—to keep others busy with his mischief, if he cannot win their favor.

We can characterize Fred in a short statement by saying he feels like a little boy who wants to impress the big adults, doubts his ability to do it successfully, but knows that mischief will bring some recognition, albeit unpleasant.

The ability to delineate a character in one or two broad strokes is perhaps more of a literary talent than a scientific one. It consists of the ability to make a generalization which coordinates all the elements into one short statement and this requires a type of skill in the use of language which is found more often among poets than among psychologists. Perhaps doing so is the hardest skill to learn of those required for assessing a life style.

An additional bit of information about Fred may now be added. Fred was a bright student at a leading university. However, he was frequently in trouble with the faculty because he cut class, would not hand in assignments on time, or was constantly asking to take courses out of sequence (mischief). The faculty recognized his talent but disapproved of his behavior. Fred had no friends although he mixed with the other students. Those complaints for which he sought psychotherapy were that he was always wanting to impress others and so did not get along well with people and that he felt uncomfortable with strangers. He wanted to learn to get along better with others.

The next set of ER is from a woman who responded differently to the challenges she met.

ER of Louise, age 54. First born and only girl (Things are seldom what they seem)

> Age 5—I was in the habit of visiting Grandmother on the far side of town [background]. One time I had a dime. I got on the street car and got my transfer and nickel change. I lost the nickel and the transfer blew out the window. When I got to the transfer point, I walked the other mile and a half. Grandmother was frantic (because I took so long to come).

> Age 5—Mother gave me a covered pail. I walked to Clark's and got milk in the pail. I don't know if I saw the cows or if a neighbor boy told me that the milk came from a cow. I couldn't wait to get home and tell and I said to Mother, "Don't buy milk from Clark's, it comes from a cow." Mother said, "Where do you think milk comes from?" "From a bottle," I said. Mother then explained to me.
>
> Age 4—Bob [younger brother] was sent to bed as punishment. He was in our parents' bedroom. I couldn't understand why he wasn't in his own room. Later, Mother wondered why he was so quiet and not protesting. She went in and Bob was peeling the wallpaper off the wall . . . It could be he was supposed to take a nap rather than being punished.
>
> Age 4—I had a tantrum and I don't know why. Father put me to bed as punishment. It was Sunday and unexpected guests came. I was heartbroken . . . Later Aunt (a guest) said to Father, "How could you?" I felt she sympathesized and I felt like a martyr.

This group contains four ER all from ages 4 and 5. Let us use the classification system and see what we can deduce. Of the topics in Table 6.1 we may consider ***surprises, obstacles, affiliation, human relations, external authority, morality,*** and ***confusion.*** These are summarized in Table 6.6.

Details. Unlike Fred's ER, Louise's are fuller in detail and tell more elaborate stories. Some of the details seem unimportant. Why does the last ER contain the information "It was Sunday?" Perhaps because Sunday is a common day for visiting relatives to come. It is a way of heightening some aspect of the story. Why the detail that Bob was quiet? Because if one does not pay attention to clues, then one can't solve the mystery and can more easily be tricked. We can expect Louise to grant great significance to little details. She will be a watchful person.

Mood. In the second and fourth ER the mood expressed is one of outrage at being tricked or martyred by unfairness. In the first ER, Grandmother is frantic because she does not know where Louise is. No happy mood is found.

TABLE 6.6
Louise's Responses to Thematic Topics Using the Classification System

SURPRISES—Each ER contains an unexpected situation. The unexpected situation requires some type of action response. In the first ER, Louise solves a problem; in the second, she hurries to relay her surprising information to Mother. In the third ER, Mother's action is to investigate the situation; and in the last, Louise's response is to suffer and feel like a martyr. Note that each of the surprises poses a confusing or unpleasant event. Each character in the ER has to face unpleasantness of some type except for the second in which only Louise mistakenly assumes that she has been the victim of a trick.

OBSTACLES—The first and last ER contain obstacle situations. In the first, Louise blithely overcomes the obstacle by her own self-reliance. In the last she is constrained by the authority of father.

AFFILIATION—The issue of affiliation is only indirectly addressed. It is seen most clearly in the last ER when Louise feels that her aunt is sympathetic. There is rather a "reporting" relationship between people in which the transmission of information becomes important. We shall discuss this again under other topics.

HUMAN RELATIONS—These ER show a certain distrust of what others may do. In the second ER Louise feels one can be misled by others. Clark's gives her milk from a cow rather than a bottle. Mother corrects this by giving her the right information. In the next ER, the brother misleads Mother by quietly peeling the wall paper. One has to be watchful in human relations because people play tricks.

EXTERNAL AUTHORITY—In the last ER, Louise is deprived of her pleasure by the authority of her father. The external authority is accused of unfairness and the ER is better considered under the topic of morality.

TABLE 6.6 (Continued)

MORALITY—This topic appears in the second and fourth ER. Louise takes the stand of righteousness in these two ER. She accuses Clark's of tricking her and accuses Father of being unfair. When aunt sympathizes, it is as if Louise has won a victory. Perhaps women are authorities in moral issues.

In the fourth ER she begins by saying she misbehaved and was being punished. She concludes by pointing out that she became the innocent victim of the punishment because she was not only sent to bed, but denied the right to see her aunt. She may do wrong, but what others do to her is much wronger.

CONFUSION—If people are liable to play tricks on each other then we cannot trust external appearances. As the song from Pinafore says:

> Things are seldom what they seem
> Skim milk masquerades as cream.

Louise and others are confused about what is really going on. Grandmother is frantic because she lacks proper information. Louise lacks information about where milk really comes from. Mother lacks information about what brother is doing. It is pictured as if mysterious things are happening and what one sees on the surface is not to be trusted.

What sort of person would have such ER? We do not find in these ER the center stage positional details we saw in Fred's ER. The same feeling is not present of wanting to impress the bigger adults or being confused by their response to her. She portrays herself as one who tries to do what is right rather than one who tries to get attention. But her basic stance to the world is not that of Fred, a little boy trying to win his membership card in adult socity; rather she is disapproving and distrusting of others. Her response is to be a moralist—"one of the good guys" who is apt to suffer at the hands of others. This moralistic stance will allow her to rise above the wrongdoers and claim a superiority to them; even if she must suffer at their hands, she can claim the status of martrydom.

The interpretation is highly suggestive but not certain from the ER that wrongdoers may more often be men than women. Thus, her brother is the mischief maker and Father is the unfair disciplinarian while Mother is the one upon whom the trick is played and Aunt is sympathetic to her when Father punishes her. Such a guess must be supported by family constellation data or by the subject's own agreement with the guess before the assessor can consider it confirmed. For the present, it would remain only a guess.

In summary form, Table 6.7 contains life style elements in Louise's ER.

TABLE 6.7
Life Style Elements in Louise's ER

SELF-IMAGE—Righteous, trying to do right, but at a disadvantage from lack of information. Being unfairly treated by authority.

WORLD VIEW—Mysteries are to be discovered. Life contains surprises.

DOMINANT GOAL/SELF IDEAL—Be righteous (more than others). Discover the truth.

METHOD OF OPERATION—Claim righteousness, look for allies, suspect, distrust, and devalue those who devalue her.

As we did with Fred, we shall now add a bit of clinical information about Louise. She came to us at the urging of her daughter and son-in-law, insisting that she had a marital problem. Her complaint was that her husband was a member of an international organization of drug smugglers. Her evidence included particular details such as the information that her husband wanted the kitchen window shade set at a certain height. Furthermore, he turned the lights on at about the same time every night, shortly after the next door neighbor turned on the lights. The diagnosis was paranoia.

We have seen that we can classify ER according to a set of thematic topics and the individual responses to these topics. From this scale we can extrapolate life style elements and incorporate them in a short description. Usually the sequence construction of the ER is repeated over and over in different variations. Sometimes the sequence itself gives us additional information. The mood expressed in the ER offers more clues. In the end we can form a global picture, a ***Gestalt,*** which uses the life style elements as a rubric: If this is "what I am" and that is "what the world is," then such and such is "what is required." In this rubric we can see the way that person has construed life.

FORMULATING BASIC MISTAKES

We have described the ***basic mistakes*** as being misperceptions—oversimplification, exaggeration, and mistaking the part for the whole. In Chapter 1, we described how Mosak (1984) classified basic mistakes into five categories and gave examples of each. We also showed how the basic mistakes matched Karen Horney's (1966) formulation of "overdriven attitudes." From our interpretation of ER we also should like to recognize the basic mistakes of the subject. Let us examine the ER of Fred to see if we can recognize such mistakes. In our formulation of Fred's responses to the topics in the ER (Table 6.5) we noted that Fred finds life unpleasant and confusing. He is shocked by it. We can consider this an overgeneralization about life as well as a misperception of it. In his memory of being unable to wash his hands like Father or please his parents, he is ***minimizing his own worth.*** In his desire to impress always and be center stage he shows a ***faulty value.***

In Chapter 1 we listed a number of distorted attitudes. Under "distorted attitudes about the self (inappropriate self-evaluations) we listed the statement "I am less capable than others" as one example. Under "distorted attitudes about the world and people" is the statement "Life is too confusing." We can say that "distorted goal" is to be the center, to keep people busy with him; the "distorted ideal" is to make a favorable impression on everyone at all times; and the "distorted method of operation" is to innocently make mischief in order to draw attention to himself and evoke a response. All of these distortions are personal myths about himself and the world, and he acts as if these myths, which may be partly true, are an accurate description of the meaning of life.

In Table 6.8 is classification of basic mistakes.

TABLE 6.8
Classification of Basic Mistakes
(Mosak, 1984)

1. OVERGENERALIZATION.

   "People are hostile."
   "Life is dangerous."

2. FALSE OR IMPOSSIBLE GOALS OF "SECURITY."

   "One false step and you're dead."
   "I have to please everybody."

3. MISPERCEPTIONS OF LIFE AND ITS DEMANDS.

   "Life never gives me a break."
   "Life is too hard."

4. MINIMIZATION OR DENIAL OF ONE'S WORTH.

   "I'm stupid."
   "I'm undeserving."
   "I'm just a housewife."

5. FAULTY VALUES.

   "Be first even if you have to climb over others."

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have described different aspects of ER that we use in eliciting life style information. We have examined various ER groupings and interpreted them in terms of theme presented and response made. We have then used our interpretation to elicit life style elements, a self-image, a world view, a dominant goal/self ideal, and a method of operation. We concluded with a description of how we can recognize basic mistakes.

We have described a variety of components that can be found in ER and have given many examples to show these components. These so-called components are actually aspects of ER which we have chosen to interpret. Perhaps other things also can be found in ER which we ignore because they do not give us the particular data we seek.

However, an important aspect to keep in mind is that we have chosen examples that are relatively easy to interpret and that not all ER may offer such promise. Nor should one expect too much from them. Sometimes one may collect a whole set of ER and find no clear statement about many of the components we have described. Not all ER reveal a self-image, a world view, ideals, or even a response style. In interpreting ER to use the data just as it is given is better than to try to infer information that is not clearly there.

Clearly we have treated ER as metaphor. ER make statements about life and one's place in it, about what is important and what is to be prized, and about what, if anything, one can do or must do about the conditions of existence.

CHAPTER 7

AN EXAMPLE

Until now we have given part examples to illustrate the technique of scoring and summarizing a life style. Now we shall give a complete example.

If the interpretation of the example seems long and arduous, it is because we are concerned with showing as well as we can the process of interpretation. The experienced interpreter will interpret the material in a much shorter time. For this occasion, however, we will go through the whole procedure.

The life style is that of a thirty-eight year old woman who came for advice about her eleven year old son who did poorly in school and was disobedient at home. He was starting to steal from the neighbors and herself, disliked school, talked back to his mother and was annoying to peers by clownish attention-seeking behavior, so that he had no friends. There were huge scenes between mother and child. Mother admitted that she had frequently beaten him because he was so disobedient. Before coming to us, she had had two years of counseling in a family agency and according to her own report, she had learned to feel much better about herself, lost her temper with her son less often and felt less guilty about her previous punishment of him. She reports that she rejected her son during his infancy and treated him with hostility although she felt love for him at the time. As an example, she reports that if he cried for his bottle, she would angrily jam the bottle in his mouth. Originally a placid child, he started to rebel at about age five and began to misbehave.

Mother and child were seen and specific suggestions were made to mother to change her behavior. She did not always follow the suggestions, but when she did she noticed considerable change in the son's behavior; e.g., he stopped stealing and tried to please her more. At this point she realized that the major source of the problem was her own behavior and asked for help in understanding herself. The life style formulation was undertaken to help her understand herself better.

Table 7.1. is information completed on the LSI during a session with the mother. In Table 7.2 is a summary of significant information drawn for the LSI.

As can be easily-seen, the tables carry redundant information. The advantage of this is that the responses repeat themselves and converge in such a way that they confirm each other. The different tables are really different ways of asking questions about the meaning of the data. The tables are a step toward correlating the data into a global picture of Nan's early social world and her chosen response to it. Where contradiction rather than confirmation appears, it must be explained. (See Chapter 4, pp. 96-97.)

FAMILY CONSTELLATION: SUMMARY

Nan was the oldest of three and only girl, for six years an only child with a doting father, living in an innocent's paradise which was shattered by the harsh attempts of father to discipline her and by the birth of the brother. She reacted to the first by complete rebellion, precipitating a love-hate relationship between herself and father with much conflict for power and a feeling that she was bad. She then abdicated her position with mother to her brother and sought her place in an exciting outside world. The two models were a doting but overpowering father and a permissive but critical and rejecting mother. She imitated father's willfulness and power tactics and felt alienated from both. She rejected any imposed values and sought to pursue her own interests.

Since the family atmosphere was chaotic and conflictual, the parents unable to impose their order on each other or on Nan after her dethronement. She tried to restore some of her

(Continued on p. 240)

TABLE 7.1
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 2)

SIBLING CONSTELLATION (Give Childhood Descriptions)
(Oldest to Youngest) Give Age for Subject and Years Older or Younger for Others

Name: Nan @ 38 Age Dif ______ M F Description: Stubborn, ran away all the time because I wanted to see things. Thought of myself as a bad child. Talked too much. Rambunctious. Drifted through grammar school. I wanted to help around the house but didn't know how to go about it, so I went at it compulsively. After brother was born, I tried to please. Had friend. Gregarious. A tomboy. I was constantly punished for stubborness. I	Name: Phillip Age Dif -6 years M F Description: Tried hard in school. More obedient, more submissive, lovable. Very high ambitions until he had a breakdown in his teens. (Authors' note-Since the breakdown occured in the teens, it took place after the development of the life style.)
~~Name Age Dif M F~~ ~~Description~~ don't remember why I was punished but I didn' know I was supposed to please other people. Later, I wanted to please other people. Not ambitious until I got older. I just wanted to play. I cared about dogs and having adventure	Name: John Age Dif -8 years M F Description: Veru ugly. Sickly, antisocial, isolated himself. I don't remember much about him, complained a lot. Very serious.
Name: ______ Age Dif ______ M F Description:	Name: ______ Age Dif ______ M F Description:

SIBLING GROUPINGS

Most different from respondent.
How?
Most like respondent.
How?
Groupings by age, sex, etc.

Sickness, surgery, or accidents?

Relationship between siblings
Who cared for and protected whom?

Who played together?

Who fought each other?

Unusual talents or achievements?

Childhood fears, childhood ambitions?

SHARED TRAITS AND/OR INTERESTS
(Shared equally by all siblings)

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TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 3)

SIBLING RATINGS
(Rate from most to least)

Intelligence	P - N & J
Elementary school grades	P - N & J
Helpful around house	
Industrious	P - N - J
Standards of achievement	P - J - N
Actual achievement	
Daring	none
Assertive	N & J - P
Patient	
Methodical	
Neat	all about equal
Persistent	
Responsible	P - N & J
Obedient	P - N & J
Mischievous	N & J - P
Open rebel	N & J - P
Covert rebel	?
Punished	N - P & J
For what?	
By whom?	
Got away with the most	
Impulsive	
Self-reliant	
Standards of right & wrong	P - N & J (tried to do right)
Critical of others	J - N - P
Critical of self	N - J - N
Easy-going	P - N - J
Sense of humor	P - N & J
Excitable	
Worried	
Other:	

Friends (most friends)	N - P - J
Charm	P - N - J
Tried to please	P - N - J
Had to please	
Succeeded in pleasing	
Outgoing	
Withdrawn	J - N - P
Cheerful	P - N - J
Considerate	all about equal
Bossy	none
Demanded way	N & J - P
Got way	N & J - P
Temper	N - J - P
Fighter	N - J - P
Chip on shoulder	J - N - P
Sulked	N - J - P
Held grudges	
Complained	
Took advantage of others	
Stubborn	N - J - P
Shy	N
Sensitive and easily hurt	J - N - P
Excitement seeker	N - P - J
Idealistic	P - N - J
Materialistic	J - N - P
Pampered	
Masculine	P
Feminine	N
Sure of self	
Athletic	none

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 4)

CHILDHOOD PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
(Health, Physique, Feelings about Body, Advantages/Disadvantages, Nicknames Associated with Physique)

I was not sickly. In my teens I had encephalitis. It seems I couldn't take pressure as well after that. Sometimes I think it wasn't just encephalitis but my total rebellion.

(Author's note: The encephalitis occurred after the lifestyle was developed. However, it may have left residual effects which would influence behavior.)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INFORMATION
(Type of School, Grades, Subject Performance, Classroom Behavior, Relationship to Teachers, Subjects Liked and Disliked)

Average student. Good speller. Poor at math. Didn't work at school. Wanted to take part in school plays but was very shy about it. Mother discouraged it. "I didn't care for school." " I did't work because I didn't like it."

CHILDHOOD MEANINGS GIVEN TO LIFE
(Expectations, Ideals, Meaningful Goals, Favorite Daydreams, Religious Convictions)

I wasn't sure what it was all about. No particular desire to be anything. I think it was a puzzle and I tried to figure it out.

4

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 5)

CHILDHOOD GENDER AND SEXUAL INFORMATION
(Development, Source of Information, Sex Play, Reaction to Pubertal Changes, Comfort with Gender, Feelings About Sexual Activity, Sexual Abuse)

I wanted to be a boy. They could do what they wanted more. Mother told me about menstruation. I never worried about things which are natural, are easy for me to accept. I had my first period when I was in a grocery store. I knew what it was and didn't let it bother me.

CHILDHOOD SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS
(Friends, Gangs, Availability of Peers, Role in Peer Group, Relations with Adults)

I blundered through social relationships but I had close personal friends. I finally learned how to make friends. It was more fun being with people who were always telling me what to do.

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 6)

PARENTAL INFORMATION DURING SUBJECT'S CHILDHOOD

Name	FATHER William	MOTHER Barbara
Current age even if deceased	Age 42	Age 40
At time of subject's birth	Age 21	Age 19
	Occupation Owned Property	Occupation Taught handicrafts
(Traits, Respected, Liked, Feared	Description: Handsome. Wealthy background. Unstable, immature, opinionated. Liked to drink and spend time with "fine people". Very fond of me. Very stern and wanted me to submit and I was determined not to. I loved him very much. Not afraid of his sternness because even when he spanked her N could usually get her way. Lost all his money during the depression and was too proud to take a job and was disappointed that no one helped him. Very few real friends, as he found out after he lost everything. Many fair weather friends.	Description: Good looking. Proud and refined. Always unhappy. She could paint, write, and play piano. She sought people out and had many friends. Very critical. Nobody pleased her. I didn't feel as close to her as I did to Father. She was more distant.

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 6)

Relations to Children		
What was most important to him/her?	to submit to him	good taste
What was way to win his/her praise?	to be strong-minded like him	
What made him/her angry?	my rebellion	her anger was at father, not the children
In what ways did he/she influence you?	I became like him	O. K.
Expectations for children	Nice manners	good taste, good manners
Who was his/her favorite? Why?	Nan. He was proud of me and enjoyed me.	Phil, but she had a special feeling for John, the baby.
Relationship to children	played with me & punished us	Let me do whatever I wanted
Sibling most like him/her In what ways?	Nan. Both strong-minded.	John, "not sure"
Who was closest to him/her?	Nan. I loved him very much.	Phil & John
Who was most distant?	O.K.	Nan
Confided in whom?	None	
Took hurts to whom?	None	
Others		

Subject's role in family	I never thought of it
Subject's feeling about family	It was the only family I knew
Worst possible fate for a child in the family	Don't know
Other	

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 7)

NATURE OF PARENTS' RELATIONSHIP
(Description, Division of Roles, Interpersonal Relationship, Conflicts/Agreements, Marriage Happy/Unhappy)

Father couldn't handle money well and Mother took over. The family seemed disorganized. Mother and Father always argued. Nobody won. N would feel sorry for both of them and would leave the house.

OTHER FAMILY INFORMATION
(Family Climate, Family Values, Socio-economic Status, Ethnicity, Religion)

Wealthy family until depression, then they became poor and Father became bitter. He used to be a big shot in our town until the depression.

The family had a tendency to look down on people who were their social inferiors but were always courteous to them.

ADDITIONAL PARENTAL FIGURES AND ADULT MODELS

Who/Relationship: ______	Who/Relationship: ______

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 8)

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

(Under age 10) (Description, Most Vivid Part, Feelings)

1. Age 5 : I saw a dog that belonged to some other people. It had a wire tied around its neck and it was nearly dead when I found it. I took off the wire and brought it home.

Feeling - I was appalled by the cruelty.
Most vivid - the wire around the poor dog's neck.

2. Age 5 : Dad asked me to wash my hands and I wouldn't. He beat me a while and I still wouldn't wash my hands. I fell asleep in the bath tub. I never did wash my hands. (The whole thing upset Mother.) (It was at this age that my trouble with Dad began.)

Feeling - I didn't give in (satisfaction).
Most vivid - beating me

3. Age 5 : (Grandfather had a stroke and couldn't talk.) One day I was catching bumble bees in a jar and Grandfather saw me and sat up in bed and called my name (after not having been able to speak since the stroke). I thought he loved me and spoke for me and no one else.

Feeling - felt loved and special
Most vivid - calling my name

4. Age 6 : (first school) I had a friend, a boy who lived across the street. We went to school together. It was thrilling. I turned around and Mother had my baby brother up in the window, waving goodbye.

Feeling - thrilling
Most vivid - looking at window, brother waving.

TABLE 7.1 (Continued)
The Life Style Inventory
(Page 9)

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5. Age 6: (I recall Mother being pregnant with Phil, but not his birth. Mother and I had a nice summer before Phil was born.)

(After Phil was born) A hurricane. Noise. Water was coming in the house. Mother and I were slipping around trying to shut windows.

Feeling - It was exciting.
Most vivid - noise, commotion

6. Age ____________:

7. Age ____________:

8. Age ____________:

9

TABLE 7.2.
Summary of LSI Information

Birth order and response

BIRTH ORDER	An only child for six years; then dethroned by a boy who had a better relationship with Mother. Life changed for her and instead of thoughtlessly doing as she pleased, she began to try to please others.
AIM	The aim of her response changes with the dethronement. Until then she felt secure in her position and saw no need to make special efforts. Afterwards, she is less secure and tries to preserve status for herself.
METHOD	She resists efforts of others to force her to submit. Stubbornness and sulking are ways of expressing power. This can be seen as the effort of a discouraged child to salvage something from the dethronement and change in father.
SOCIAL ROLE IMPLICATIONS	A dethroned first born discouraged about recovering her favored position who now refuses to submit to family authority.
GROUP PROCESS IMPLICATIONS	Her rebellion suggests that the family had an arbitrary order and failed to teach the subject the rudiments of cooperation. The parents modeled conflict. Thus, in this family, a contest for power can be expected, such contests perhaps the most common form of relationship.

TABLE 7.2
Continued

Gender and Constitution and Responses	
GENDER FEMALE	Reports self as tomboy and wanting to be a boy (perhaps because it seemed to offer more freedom, perhaps more power). Otherwise, she does not let any of the aspects of the female gender hamper her (such as menstruation).
AIM	Not to submit to any constraints of gender.
METHOD	Events associated with femininity have no special meaning (it was just "natural").
SOCIAL ROLE IMPLICATIONS	This category contains no special reference to gender.
GROUP PROCESS IMPLICATIONS	Men and women seem attracted to each other and they fight with each other.
Models and Responses	
FATHER	He is someone who loves her greatly and enjoys her and also abuses her. He models what seems to be an arbitrary authoritarian demand for submission.
RESPONSE TO MODEL	She loves him for his devotion to her and opposes his demand for submission. In fact, she imitates father.

TABLE 7.2
Continued

MOTHER	She is a capable, resourceful, and refined person who lets the subject do things her own way, but is not close and loving like Father. Mother is critical.
RESPONSE	After brother's birth, the subject's unthinking egocentricity is stopped. She tries to please and be helpful to Mother, but feeling that Mother prefers brother, she leaves Mother to him and seeks elsewhere for her status.
SOCIAL ROLE IMPLICATIONS	Subject imitates Father in power motive. The maternal and domestic roles do not come naturally to her, but she is critical like Mother (moral superiority motive).
GROUP PROCESS	This seems to be a group of upper middle class people who only function well when they have a superior position, Father when rich and Nan when she has no rivals. Nan recovers and learns to "make friends." Intimacy seems fraught with conflict over dominance.
Family Values and Responses	
PERSONAL DOMINANCE	She refuses to submit to Father's dominance. Since the specific demand by Father is that she submit to his will, she opposes her will to his and chooses to do what she wants rather than what others try to impose on her.

TABLE 7.2
Continued

MANNERS AND REFINEMENT	She feels burdened by these demands, but still wants to be pleasing. This leads to some confusion, since she wants to do her own thing and have others be pleased at the same time.

One result is that she is often at odds with herself—oversensitive to and fighting against what she perceives as imposition. Yet wanting others to like her at the same time.

Ambient culture and response

The fact that the family was wealthy may explain why the parents were more interested in refined behavior than in the work ethic. This may also be the source of Father's pride and subsequently the subject's stubborn pride. The family motto may have been "noli me tangere."

Family atmosphere and response

MOOD	The demands, criticisms and conflicts seem to have created considerable excitement in the family. In addition, Father's inconsistent behavior (the alternation between admiration and punishment) and instability added to the excitement. The subject's response was to add to the excitement herself with her own stubbornness and temper and to withdraw from the family as a scene of action and find her way outside the home.

TABLE 7.2
Continued

ORDER	Along with the excitable and changing mood is an inconsistent order in which the parents were constantly at odds. Father was stern and Mother was permissive and critical at the same time. These two guiding lines contradicted each other. Her response is to oppose the parents' order and create her own structure of order outside the house; with dogs and friends, where she could do as she pleased.
RELATIONSHIPS	Human relationships in the family were conflictual unless one submitted as brother did. She opposes any imposition and leaves the others to fight their own battles, while feeling sorry for them. The more intimate the relationship, the more conflict there is.

FAMILY CONSTELLATION: RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Social role

LOCATION	First born, only girl and Father's favorite, but not refined enough for Mother or submissive enough for Father.
EXPECTATIONS	Others should love her, but they should not impose on her or restrict her.

TABLE 7.2
Continued

ENACTMENT	Resists the dominance of others but tries to win their love.
ROLE SKILLS	Feels much more adequate as a fighter than as a pleaser. She tries to be helpful, but doesn't know how.
SELF-ROLE CONGRUENCE	Being both an opponent and a pleaser introduces contradictions in the role. She will often not be sure what sort of person she really is and will feed various alternating dysphoric emotions. She will feel that she is bad but justified, and trying to be good but not succeeding.
SOCIAL ROLE WITH PEERS	She is more successful in pleasing where authorities do not exist and relationships are less intimate.
Meaning of life	
TRUST	Although she can feel loved, she doesn't trust intimate relationships.
SELF-RELIANCE	This does not seem to be a significant issue for Nan, one way or the other.
COOPERATION	She is poorly trained in cooperation.
PESSIMISM	She experienced difficulty and conflict about intimate relationships, but can have close friends when there is no power issue.
COURAGE	She is courageous in fighting her opponents but discouraged about successfully pleasing intimates.

TABLE 7.2
Continued

ACTIVITY	She pursues her own interests actively, but has no interest in pursuing imposed tasks (e.g., school).
SELF-CONCEPT	A contradictory and thus confused self-concept. Views self as a bad person who is trying to be good but doesn't know how to do it.
ALIENATION	She feels belonging outside the family—to dogs, friends, her own interests. Alienated from the family.

Sibling territories

	Nan	**Phil**	**John**
ACADEMIC		X	
HELPFULNESS		X	
AMBITIOUS STRIVING		X	
METHODS OF ACTIVITY	excitement seeking	industry	complaining
	trying to please	following rules	sensitivity
	doing her own thing	cheerfulness	withdrawal
	resisting order		criticism
	criticism		

TABLE 7.2
Continued

	Nan	Phil	John
COMPLIANCE		X	
OPPOSITION	X		X
SOCIABILITY	X	X	
PERSONAL DOMINANCE	X		
DEPENDENCY			X
MORALITY		X	
CONTROL	X		X
ACCOMODATION		X	
GENDER ROLE	does not become a significant family issue (the daughter can imitate Father and the son can imitate Mother)		

Note: The symbol X means that the trait was displayed by the sibling indicated, and thus was a "territory" of behavior for that sibling.

place by pleasing Mother. When this was unsuccesful, she went outside the family to find a place. The outside world was more pleasant, more harmonious, and permitted her more freedom from authoritarian demands.

She played the role of family bad girl, frustrating her frustrating parents; but this power did not bring her the love she wanted nor did her ineffective attempts to please.

DISCUSSION

Early Development Issues

The FC summary makes assumptions about how and why Nan selected her personality traits and tries to present her behavior as an understandable response to conditions as she experienced them. Father's harsh discipline must have seemed arbitrary and unfair to his favorite daughter and she turned against him in anger. While Mother used no such harsh punishment, she was verbally rejecting. Nan concluded that she was "bad" and behaved in line with her self-perception. This is not the only possible conclusion for a child to draw from such a situation, but it is a probable one.

The retreat to the outside world, her dogs and friends, is also understandable. Her idyllic life had been destroyed.

Predictions

While she will have an idealistic notion of family relationships, she may have the most trouble with these relationships. Furthermore, she will resist any order or schedule other than her own. She will probably also have high standards of manners and refinement (propriety) and will be as critical as mother was and as forceful as father, but will express this behavior openly only within the family. At the same time she will be sympathetic to the underdog and try to make it up to him. Thus she will feel both guilty and angry, have a negative self image and be confused about herself—feel like a bad person and act like one and then try to be good and act like a friend.

She will have her own interests, whatever they be, and will want to be free to pursue them.

Principle symptoms are likely to be self-doubt, temper, willfulness and acting out plus self-punitive tendencies. Depression may occur. Close family relationships may be stormy. Conversely, she may select a compliant and understanding husband and have non-conflicted family relationships.

In examining the ER, we will first look at some of their elements: positional details, sequence construction and thematic topics. We will then construct a summary as we did for the family constellation.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

Positional Details

Three positional details appear. In ER #2 she falls asleep in the bath tub at the scene of her contest with father. She is exhausted but victorious because she did not give in. She can be in the inferior position but still triumph (a Pyrrhic victory).

In ER #2 her grandfather is lying in bed and out of love for her, sits up (overcomes his disability) and speaks. The meaning of the detail is unclear. Does it say that love has the power to overcome handicaps? That she, herself has special power to evoke responses in others? Perhaps both meanings are present.

In ER #3 mother holds brother up in the window behind her as she is leaving. The detail shows that mother and brother are now an intimate unit and Nan goes out into the world to seek her fortune with her own companion. This recapitulates a theme in the family constellation.

Feelings

Four memories expressly state feelings while one implies it. The emotions include pity, anger, love and pleasant excitement. The subject does not suppress feelings. Her feelings are important to her in helping her interpret the world and respond to it.

Sequence Construction

This set of ER shows a definite sequence. In the first ER (the only one without human interaction) she presents herself as sympathetic to the dog who has been abused and neglected. It is a statement about the cruelty of people. But she is not cruel to dogs; she is a friend of underdogs.

The second ER depicts her as the abused child who rebels against the cruel father. The third ER presents an idyllic situation, the special power in love or in herself to break through barriers; the claim that there should be more love in the world. These first three ER form one statement about how life is and how it should be. Each ER is a melodrama with clear heroes and villains. People who abuse power are villains. People who act out of love are heroes.

The last two ER deal with a different topic, her dethronement. The last ER is prefaced by what seems irrelevant background until we realize that she orders three events. First there is an idyllic summer with mother. Then Philip is born. Last there is a hurricane. This sequence is her own construction according to her own associations. Before Philip came, life with mother was idyllic. His coming is perceived as a hurricane, chaos.

The fourth ER is also a dethronement memory. In both these ER the fact of dethronement is presented but she reacts to it by active behavior and excitement. She finds a new field of action for herself—the outside world and its adventures.

If we recall that Philip's birth is associated in time with the onset of her conflict with Father, we can guess how critical this time in her life was for her.

Thematic Topics

DETHRONEMENT—The ER show no direct memory of the brother's birth. In one ER her reaction is to leave mother and brother together while she goes off on a thrilling adventure with a male playmate. She accepts the dethronement and goes on to other areas. In the other ER, brother's birth is presented as background only and is followed by a hurricane which invades the house. Her reaction is one of excitement in trying to cope with the elemental forces. She copes with dethronement by relegating it to the background and dealing with the world at large.

AFFILIATION—Affiliation issues are present in all ER except the last but are most clearly seen in the first and third. She takes sides with the abused dog (identifies with it) but in the effect of grandfather's love for her we see this issue presented in an ideal.

EXTERNAL AUTHORITY—ER #2 portrays the struggle between herself and the external authority. She resists, will not submit, is even proud of her ability to resist to the bitter end.

POWER—This issue seems related to the EXTERNAL AUTHORITY issue. She opposes imposed power with her own power to resist. Although smaller and weaker, she has power of her own. The power to be stubborn and the power that comes from being loved. It is also the power that allows her to champion the underdog.

MORALITY—The moral statement in the ER is that abuse of power is an evil. Righteousness is on the side of the underdog.

HUMAN INTERACTION—The ER show varieties of interaction. The best and the worst of interaction are presented, but in the last two ER there is also the comradeship of people engaged in common adventures. In this task, she and others can cooperate.

NEW SITUATIONS—She meets new situations with anticipatory excitement, expecting to have new colleagues along the way.

EXCITEMENT—See NEW SITUATIONS

What sort of person would have such ER? An excitement seeker with strong feelings. An adventurer, active and opinionated who is critical of those who abuse power. She does not want to submit to others. She wants to be free. She is open to the events of the natural world and its order but will not take orders from others willingly. Her banner is Commodore Perry's flag—a snake with the motto, "Don't tread on me."

Life Style Elements

> SELF-IMAGE—There are four different presentations of the self in the five ER. In ER # 1 she is nurturing rescuer of a victim of the cruelty of others. In ER # 2 she is a stubborn rebel against imposed demands (even though the demand that she wash here hands does not seem, on the face of it, unreasonable. In ER # 3 she is special through being loved. Her admirer will do things for her that he will not do for others. In the last two ER she presents herself as avidly participating in the exciting aspects of the outside world, in cooperation with another person in the task-coping process.

Although the FC data states that she saw herself as a bad girl, the only ER in which she could likely see herself this way is the second in which she describes her refusal to submit to father's demand. In the ER she presents herself as quite powerful. Although weaker and smaller, she is not afraid of the world. Only those who would impose their will on her are threatening (abusers). She can meet the "things" which are natural (see the section on sexual information) with enthusiasm. Even hurricanes do not frighten her as much as excite her.

Shall we however interpret the hurricane as representing the chaos ensuing after Brother's birth and her attempts to cope with it or stand for her acceptance of natural events? We can do both because we can view the data as representing either or both—and this double view can give us clues to more than one underlying motive.

The preponderance of the evidence in the ER is that her self-image is one of being powerful enough to fight against abuse and win, of having power through being loved and of eagerness to deal with the natural order of the world.

This set of ER is one in which the examiner may do better to interpret the other life style elements first before attempting to determine the self-image. Let us proceed.

WORLD VIEW—This element is easier to see. The world itself is an exciting place in which one can find may interesting pursuits (rescuing dogs, catching bumblebees, fighting hurricanes, and seeking new adventures). The family situation is the unpleasant place. People can love her but make trouble for her. But in this world, the weak can fight back, can be rescued by champions and the more they are loved, the more they are empowered.

DOMINANT GOAL/SELF IDEAL—To retain her freedom to direct her own life and her behavior without interference from others, even from those she loves (see clinical information given at the beginning of this example about how she behaved with her infant child). To have no "wires" around her neck. To have the power to do her own thing.

METHOD OF OPERATION—She refuses to submit to the power of others but tries to win their love (which will add to her power) by pleasing them. Life may buffet her about but it will not defeat her. A fighter and a lover.

Now it will be easier to elicit a self-image: Although she is weak, she can successfully resist others. Although this may mean she is "bad," she resists them any way. She has power—the power of refusing to submit and the power that comes from being loved (successfully pleasing people). She is here to enjoy life, not to do what others want.

In this case, the confirming data from the FC is important for guiding us through the interpretation of the ER. The scoring of positional details helps us see how the ER images portray, for example, the little girl asleep in the bath tub exhausted by her fight against Father, Grandfather sitting upright in his bed out of love for her, and how Mother elevates the brother into an intimate relationship with her, waving goodbye as Nan goes off with a friend to seek their fortune.

The feeling details suggest that Nan expresses her feelings openly and strongly, perhaps even to excess.

The sequence construction allows us to precipitate out two separate themes, the theme of power and its abuse and the theme of coping joyfully with the outside world after she has lost her cherished place at home.

The use of the thematic topics table confirms what we elicited from the sequence construction and refines it. The life style elements table and our attempt to answer the question, "What sort of person would have such ER?" now gives enough information to construct a life style rubric:

> I must go my own way. Life is a place where others may try to force me to go their way. Therefore, I must use all my powers to resist them and remain free to enjoy my life.

In this highly oversimplified rubric we hope to capture the leitmotif of Nan's life style. This is, in essence, what we did when we characterized Fred in Chapter 6, as being like a little boy trying to impress the big adults. We could also describe Louise (Chapter 6) as the person who is always watching out for tricks. As for Nan, perhaps we have already described her well by saying that her banner contains the snake and the motto "Don't tread on me."

> SUMMARY: The most important thing in life is power. I will be powerful by going my own way and resisting the efforts of others to make me submit—even if I have to go down fighting, but my refusal will be my victory.
>
> Life may present challenges and dangers but I can handle them all with a friend at my side. This challenge is exhilarating. I don't believe in being weak. I can overcome the people who try to overpower me, champion the underdog, and cope with the awesome powers of nature.
>
> Love itself can confer power in an almost miraculous way.
>
> COMMENT: There is no single way of constructing a summary and no single starting point which is always used. The summary is an artistic product which tries to

combine the many different facets in the ER into a unified whole in which the parts have a meaningful relationship to each other.

Predictions

We are far less likely to find developmental information in the ER than in the FC, but predictive information is available. In many cases, this information is congruent with the predictions we made after formulating the FC, such as her trouble with intimate relationships, her resistance to imposed order, and her desire to pursue her own interests. Other predictions are not necessarily confirmed. For example, the ER do not show her as admitting defeat. She saves the dog, wins out over father, effects a near miracle with grandfather, and reacts to dethronement by leaving the scene to the usurper and throwing herself into other activity. This is not the style of a person who ordinarily becomes depressed; it is rather an active compensating style, a search for new fields of action, a retreat from the scene of a defeat to avoid remaining in an inferior position and a reestablishment of her freedom in another area. We can predict that if she cannot win out in one place, she will find another place where she can.

Mosak (1965) suggested that the ER offer information which can allow one to predict how the patient would respond to the psychotherapist. The expectations and methods of operation (coping styles) of the subject will be displayed in the patient-therapist relationship. In this case we may predict that Nan will have the capacity to form a therapeutic alliance, will find therapy intriguing yet will resist attempts by the therapist to persuade her to change her behavior.

BASIC MISTAKES

Category List

SELF—The FC data implies that Nan sees herself as bad because she resists the parental order, especially when compared to Phil, who is good. The ER data stresses the power issue more than the good/bad issue. This list of common mistakes about the self in Chapter 1 contains one statement that fits our data: "I am entitled to my own way." This conviction is somewhat tempered by her decision, after dethronement, to be more pleasing to people to avoid losing their love, but we can still list this conviction as a presumptive basic mistake subject to further verification.

THE WORLD AND PEOPLE—It is not about the world, but about people that she makes a mistake. Her demand to live her own way will bring her into conflict with people. Close relationships become very difficult if one is unwilling ever to bend one's will. This was the same problem Father had in close relationships, a difficulty in coming to terms with realities. The mistake is that she confounds acceptance of and adherence to a social order with personal submission and defeat.

DISTORTED METHODS OF OPERATION—From the list we can select "Insistence of one's way" and "Rebelling against all (imposed) authority." We can expect disturbed interpersonal relationships to result from this.

DISTORTED ETHICAL IDEALS—She confounds cooperation with authority with involuntary submission to it. Also, cooperation with the social order interferes with her pursuit of her interests. The need to give the baby a bottle is experienced as an imposition, rather than just the natural order of things.

DISTORTED CONCLUSIONS (MEANING OF LIFE)

PESSIMISM—She does doubt her ability to develop satisfying, conflict-free, close relationships.

WHAT SOLVES ALL PROBLEMS?—Freedom from restraint, aided by unconditional love, solves all problems. If she could recapture the situation she had at home before brother was born and before she began to have trouble with Father, she would have no problems.

CYNICISM—No particular mistaken conviction becomes apparent in this area.

FANATICISM—The mistake is in her excess devotion to her own triumph over the rule imposers. She fights to the end for this principle even if all she has to do is wash her hands, a small item.

The Category list is useful for assessing personality assets as well as mistakes.

SELF—Nan believes that she can effect change, rescue others, fight oppressors, and collaborate with peers. She is not discouraged about meeting the tasks of life.

THE WORLD AND PEOPLE—Her openness to the world of nature, her sense of adventure in the world and her ability to cooperate are all assets for coping with life.

METHODS OF OPERATION—The data suggest that Nan is active, courageous, and does not give up easily.

ETHICAL IDEALS—She champions the underdog, (although in relation to her son, she behaves more like the authoritarian father). She genuinely believes in loving relationships.

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT LIFE—She is an optimist who believes that problems can be solved and people can get along together.

One strength is her flexibility. When a method doesn't work, she can change it. When she becomes discouraged in one area of endeavor, she can put it behind her and proceed to another.

She is rather optimistic about life and eager to meet its challenges, finding them exciting. She is courageous and active in coping with life. She is self-reliant and collaborative with others in problem solving behavior. She is not an isolate. She is aware of her feelings and knows when she is carried away by them. She has a genuine interest in good relations with others even if she often doesn't know how. The recognition that it is not good to displease people is actually a strength. Her awareness that she too may abuse power and her discomfort about it is also a strength and an indication that she is open to change.

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have presented in extensive detail a set of life style data and the process of its interpretation. We have used enough scales to create redundancy in the elicited data in order to show in detail how the interpreter assembles conclusions. These conclusions depict what we call a life style and we have depicted it as a set of convictions and chosen behaviors which are a logical outcome of the interactions between these convictions and early childhood experience. We have tried to show how the convictions themselves are a creative perceptual organization which is an understandable and adaptive processing of the information offered by the early experiences. We have all along kept in mind the theoretical dictum that knowing the life style will tell us the person's core constructs and program for coping with the environment. It will show us the personality as a unit, a ***Gestalt.***

Is going through this long procedure necessary to understand the life style? Certainly not, but it is the most reliable method we know. Need the procedure be so long? Again, no, but the procedure is a guideline which can be followed at the examiner's pleasure. Experienced interpreters will no doubt use short cuts. Creative examiners may devise other interpretive procedures. We ourselves do not find it necessary to go through all the procedural steps we have described. We do not always require such a mass of data, nor need we use all the category lists. More often, we have developed an intuitive ability to discern the life style much more quickly, but when our intuition is not good enough, when the data seems puzzling or contradictory, the category lists organize our understanding of the data and point us toward a correct conclusion.

In the end, however, formulating a life style still requires a certain amount of intuition and to achieve this, any natural talent for empathic guessing must be amplified by personal experience with the method.

CHAPTER 8

THE PLACE OF LIFE STYLE ASSESSMENT IN THE GENERAL AREA OF ASSESSMENT

Where can we place the life style in the assessment process? Is it interview? Questionnaire? Rating scale? Projective technique? Actually, it possesses elements of each of these methods. Certainly the life style data collection derives its information through interview, and we have already alluded to interviewing issues in various chapters. While much of the data sought come from spontaneous description, we also solicit much information through specific questioning. Adler (1917) had devised a questionnaire as have other Adlerians, such as Alexandra Adler (1950/1973) and Wexberg (1929/1970), but none of these was intended specifically to lead to a life style formulation. Until the 1950s the interpretation of a life style was not a formal procedure. Therapists before that period merely listened to the patient over a period of interviews, and as the patient produced the data, the life style was formulated through accretion of interpretations of discrete data until a global pattern could be discerned and described by the therapist. Some Adlerian therapists still operate in that fashion.

The formal life style investigation emerged when Rudolf Dreikurs had occasion to teach the authors how to interpret patient life styles. Dreikurs, practicing multiple psychotherapy (Dreikurs, Shulman, & Mosak, 1984), assigned patients to us and instructed us to collect specific information concerning the patient's early development and family interactions and also to elicit early childhood memories. Then we met with him and the patient and presented the collected data which he then interpreted and summarized. To assist in the process Dreikurs (1954) developed a questionnaire which remained in use for several years. The questionnaire was later discarded when we discovered that students were following it slavishly rather than using it as a clinical tool. As replacement we constructed several life style inventories, the first formal one appearing in 1971 and culminating in the LSI which appears in this volume. In Chapter 4 is presented a suggested questionnaire which should not be adhered to over rigidly.

Page 3 of the LSI takes the form of a rating scale. We have experimented with a number of forms of ratings, changing the traits as well as the rating methods. Two forms of ratings are illustrated in Chapter 4. Thus far, we have not developed a scaling method for treating these data. Our only recourse currently is to interpret these ratings clinically (Mosak, Schneider, & Mosak, 1980).

Finally, the early recollections have long been considered a projective technique (Munroe, 1955; Lieberman, 1957; Mosak, 1958) and interpreted as such. Also the family constellation data collection appears to be a projective technique since these produced data are not completely objective but rather subject to the patient's biased apperception. What the patient narrates is often colored, modified, distorted in content, focus, and emphasis. Significant omissions, additions, and elaborations also occur on a non-conscious level. This subjectivity becomes visible when one investigates the life style of two siblings. One often wonders, listening to their disparate descriptions, whether they grew up in the same family.

Given the character of the LSI the interpreter must become proficient in interpreting a multi-faceted instrument, the number of variables limited only by the variety of personal and family traits, conditions, and interactions present in humankind.

As the development of the life style assessment process progressed, the question of what exactly was being elicited and formulated arose. Could we select a group of elements crucial to what we thought of as "life style" and filter out other elements, no matter how interesting or informative which were "not life style?" Dreikurs, from the Adlerian point of view, instructed us to always look for a self-concept hidden somewhere in the life style data. Mosak (1954), whose original training was nondirective, had also been trained by Rogers to look for the self-concept. The complexities and variations in self-concept soon became apparent. One person might seem mainly focused on the self as "adequate" or "inadequate" ("OK" or "not OK" in transactional analysis terms), a "success" or "failure." Another might center the concept of self upon relationships with others, while a third might perceive the self as a gender-determined entity, in terms of maleness and femaleness. What was being elicited was not the total concept of self which Allport (1955) had described. Ours was a unique and idiosyncratic concept founded upon idiosyncratic perceptions. Stated differently, the self-concept was a product of biased apperception. Similarly the person's perception of the world proved equally subjective and idiosyncratic. What occured to us was that we were studying ***uniqueness*** rather than combinations of traits. Through the life style method we could learn what made one person different than or like others. This conclusion was congruent with Adler's use of the term "Individual Psychology" which refers to the "individual", an indivisible unity, the whole person with his or her uniqueness rather than to a psychology of individual differences.

In teaching life style, determining the unique personality created difficulty, leading to the investigation as to whether life style "type templates" could be constructed. Adler (1964b/1929) described patients with a phrase such as "the beggar as king" and "the bloated red frog." Mosak (1984) uses a similar process called "creating images." We devised a list of 14 "types" (Mosak & Shulman, 1961) which we later extended (Mosak, 1979). This created a different problem in that any typology violates the concept of uniqueness. Following the lead of Adler (1935) we cautioned that these types were heuristic models solely and that things which were similar were not necessarily identical. Mosak (1971, 1977) has provided a brief description of these types, has discussed two of them at length (1959, 1973), and Peven (1973) has described a third. A close look at these type descriptions indicates that they refer to the Self-Ideal, e.g., "In order to have a place I should be in control" and to the Methods of Operation i.e., the cluster of possible behavioral traits utilized by people possessing such a Self-Ideal. Kern and his co-workers (Wheeler, Kern, & Curlette, 1984) have constructed some measures of what they refer to as life style. These measures might more appropriately be termed "life style type" measures.

"The trouble with types," says Sundberg (1977), "is that most people do not fit them exactly" (p.6). In order to assess the idiosyncratic qualities of an individual personality, one must take into account, Sundberg continued, the setting in which behavior takes place, the mutually interacting elements in the setting and the role taken by or assigned to the person in this setting. The family constellation study meets these criteria. While the unique, idiosyncratic personality can only be partially approached through type classifications, typing remains a useful assessment and teaching vehicle. It permits the comparing of individuals and the prediction of their possible behaviors. Thus Attarian (1978) and Manaster and Perryman (1984) have conducted research on the relationship of life style and vocational choice, Mosak (1965) has made predictions related to patient-therapist interaction, and Kern and his co-workers (Mullis et al., 1984; Wheeler et al., 1984) have sought to quantify information placing people in type categories. Their search for themes such as social interest, conformity, and exploitation remains a useful approach to studying behavior and personality.

The life style formulation is not a psychiatric diagnosis, not a mental status examination, not an assessment of psychopathology or intelligence although we may on occasion derive such information from the life style data. We can derive inferences about such personality variables as locus of control, field dependence, cognitive complexity, achievement need and the power motive, but the life style assessment is not designed to tap these. The life style is basically a statement about personality. It formulates in outline form what Allport (1955) described as "the transitive process of personality."

> Each person is an idiom into himself, an apparent isolation of the species....If there is to be a science of personality at all it should do better than it has in the past with the feature of personality that is most outstanding—its manifest uniqueness of organization. (Allport, 1955, pp.19,21)

Capturing the uniqueness of the personality, according to Adler (1927), was best accomplished through understanding the individual's pattern of movement, a dynamic rather than static view. This line of movement, self-chosen and self-guided, its direction and its pace, forms the essence of what the life style is designed to capture. In brief, to summarize what we have already described in Chapter 1, the life style is a superordinate system with several subsystems—a self-perception, a view of the world, the perceived requirements for the self to live in the world and actualize, a perception of what the ideal self and the ideal world should be, a notion of how those ideals can be approached, a ***modus operandi*** for pursuing this cardinal motive (which includes a set of rules for coping, including rules for coping with stress), and an opinion about how one is going to fare, whether one has a chance or not, whether it is all worthwhile or not. We can infer from the life style the meaning of life, the meaning of the good life, and the nature of the ethical life. All of these reflect the person's movement or lack of it, the direction, socially and personally constructive or socially and personally non-constructive, aspirations, expectations, and long range goals which we incorporate into our summary statement of the life style. The life style summary also affords us a subjective picture of the early life history, the family dynamics, and the conditions and perceptions which helped the person select his or her posture in life. Furthermore, the projective quality of the earliest childhood recollections uncovers inner perceptions outside of the subject's own awareness. We observe how the person constructs a "self-in-the-world."

Reliability studies (Colker & Slaymaker, 1984; Ferguson, 1964; Gushurst, 1971; Hedvig, 1963; Magner-Harris, Riordan, Kern, & Curlette, 1979) have demonstrated that ERs are more consistent than TAT protocols, which can be influenced by situational variables to a far greater extent. Eckstein (1976) and Savill and Eckstein (1987) have shown that in counseling and clinical populations, changes in ERs reflect changes in outlook and mental status. Though other forms exist for collecting life style data (e.g., see Baruth & Eckstein, 1981; Powers & Griffith, 1987) other than the method discussed here, as of yet no studies have been undertaken to explore reliability through alternate form testing. O'Phelan (1977) presented a statistical evaluation of attributes of our life style form upon which interested researchers may begin such comparisons.

Validity studies have been numerous. Mosak (1969) and Taylor (1975) have presented reviews of validation studies of ER. Bruhn and Davidow (1983); Friedman and Schiffman (1962); Hafner, Fakouri, Ollendick, and Corotto (1979); and Harder (1979) have demonstrated concurrent validity of ER with nosological assessments across a spectrum of categories (delinquency, schizophrenia, depression, narcissism), as have Jackson and Sechrest (1962) and Langs (1965a, 1965b). A number of studies have discussed the predictive validity of ER in diverse populations and across situations, from vocational assessment (Attarian, 1978; Manaster & Perryman, 1974); to personality assessment and diagnosis (Barrett, 1980; Ferguson, 1964; Harder, 1979); to criminal activity (Reimanis, 1974); and to college achievement (Rogers, 1977). Chesney, Fakouri, and Hafner (1986) and Colker and Slaymaker (1984) have discussed ER predictive validity with alcoholics and substance abusers. Platt, Mosalski, and Eisenman (1968) have explored the predictive value of an understanding of sex and birth order factors upon expectations of occupational success.

Construct validity, via factor analysis, has been undertaken by Mullis, Kern, and Curlette (1987); West and Bubenzer (1978); and Wheeler, Kern, and Curlette (1986) of life style themes and data. Content validity of life style data, particularly of family constellation material, has come primarily from research upon the Adlerian conception of birth order. Driscoll and Eckstein (1982) have summarized the results of over 120 different studies pertaining to birth order. Angeli (1973); Croake and Hayden (1975); Lohman, Lohman, and Christensen (1985); Pulakos (1987) and Verger (1968) have validated the Adlerian interest in exploring sibling interaction as it pertains to life style formation. Herrell (1972); Lemay (1968); Perlin and Grater (1984); Platt, Moskalski, and Eisenman (1968); Wagner and Schubert (1977); and Wark, Swanson, and Mack (1974) have validated Adlerian formulations of birth order as evident in cases of college misconduct, military adjustment, reported interpersonal behavior, expectations of occupational success, U.S. presidents, and college plans. Nield, Ward, and Edgar (1977) have clarified the birth order conceptualization by emphasizing that research be continued not from the ordinal, static perspective, but rather from the psychological, perceived vantage point of the individual. With such a stance, many methodical and outcome inconsistencies are rectified.

Though far from exhaustive, the research is encouraging and almost universally supportive of Adlerian life style conceptions. Continued research and empirical investigation will be required, however, to explore and clarify various issues and to delineate fine distinctions and differences.

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